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Debates on Indian Affairs

HOUSE OF LORDS

SESSION 1924

(14 & 15 GEORGE V.)

[From 15th January to 9th October, 1924.]

COMPRISING EXTRACTS FROM
THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(OFFICIAL REPORT)

OF QUESTIONS, PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES RELATING
TO INDIAN AFFAIRS.

LONDON:
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1924

HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

[FORMED BY MR. BALDWIN, MAY, 1923—

RESIGNED 22ND JANUARY, 1924.]

Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Leader of the House of Commons—Rt. Hon. STANLEY BALDWIN, M.P.

Lord Privy Seal—Rt. Hon. Viscount CECIL OF CHELWOOD.

Lord President of the Council and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords—
Most Hon. the Marquess of SALISBURY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B.

Lord Chancellor—Rt. Hon. Viscount CAVE, G.C.M.G., K.C.

Chancellor of the Exchequer—Rt. Hon. ARTHUR NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN,
M.P.

Secretary of State for Home Affairs—Rt. Hon. W. C. BRIDGEMAN, M.P.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Leader of the House of Lords—
Most Hon. the Marquess CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I.,
G.C.I.E.

Secretary of State for the Colonies—Rt. Hon. His Grace the Duke of
DEVONSHIRE, K.G., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

Secretary of State for War—Rt. Hon. the Earl of DERBY, K.G., G.C.B.
G.C.V.O.

Secretary of State for India—Rt. Hon. Viscount PEEL, G.B.E.

Secretary of State for Air—Rt. Hon. Sir SAMUEL HOARE, Bart., C.M.G., M.P.

First Lord of the Admiralty—Rt. Hon. LEOPOLD C. M. S. AMERY, M.P.

President of the Board of Trade—Rt. Hon. Sir PHILIP LLOYD-GREAME,
K.B.E., M.P.

Minister of Health—Rt. Hon. Sir WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS, Bart., M.P.

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries—Rt. Hon. Sir ROBERT A. SANDERS,
Bart.

Secretary for Scotland—Rt. Hon. Viscount NOVAR, G.C.M.G.

President of the Board of Education—Rt. Hon. EDWARD F. L. WOOD, M.P.

Minister of Labour—Rt. Hon. Sir MONTAGUE BARLOW, K.B.E.

Postmaster General—Rt. Hon. Sir LAMING WORTHINGTON-EVANS, Bart.,
G.B.E., M.P.

India Office—

Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Viscount PEEL, G.B.E.

Under-Secretary of State—Earl WINTERTON, M.P.

HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

[FORMED BY RT. HON. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, JANUARY, 1924.]

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—Rt. Hon. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, M.P.

Lord Privy Seal and Deputy Leader of the House of Commons—Rt. Hon. J. R. CLYNES, M.P.

Lord President of the Council—Rt. Hon. Lord PARMOOR, K.C.V.O.

Lord Chancellor—Rt. Hon. Lord HALDANE, K.T., O.M.

Chancellor of the Exchequer—Rt. Hon. PHILIP SNOWDEN, M.P.

Secretary of State for Home Affairs—Rt. Hon. ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.

Secretary of State for the Colonies—Rt. Hon. J. H. THOMAS, M.P.

Secretary of State for War—Rt. Hon. STEPHEN WALSH, M.P.

Secretary of State for India—Rt. Hon. Lord OLIVIER, K.C.M.G., C.B.

Secretary of State for Air—Rt. Hon. Lord THOMSON.

First Lord of the Admiralty—Rt. Hon. Viscount CHELMSFORD, G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.B.E.

President of the Board of Trade—Rt. Hon. SIDNEY WEBB, M.P.

Minister of Health—Rt. Hon. JOHN WHEATLEY, M.P.

Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries—Rt. Hon. NOEL BUXTON, M.P.

Secretary for Scotland—Rt. Hon. WILLIAM ADAMSON, M.P.

President of the Board of Education—Rt. Hon. CHARLES PHILIPS TREVELYAN, M.P.

Minister of Labour—Rt. Hon. THOMAS SHAW, M.P.

Postmaster General—Rt. Hon. VERNON HARTSHORN, M.P.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—Colonel Rt. Hon. JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD, M.P.

First Commissioner of Works—Rt. Hon. F. W. JOWETT, M.P.

India Office—

Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Lord OLIVIER, K.C.M.G., C.B.

Under-Secretary of State—ROBERT RICHARDS, Esq., M.P.

SESSION 1924.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 15th January, 1924.

THE KING'S SPEECH.

THE KING being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar with their Speaker, His Majesty was pleased to make a most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, and then retired.

His Majesty's Speech was as follows:—

"My Lords and Members of the House of Commons,

"My relations with Foreign Powers continue to be friendly. I am glad to be able to record definite progress in the solution of questions which have hitherto blocked the pathway of mutual understanding and have retarded the recovery of the world.

"The Reparation Commission has set up two Committees, on which Experts from the United States of America will co-operate with others from Great Britain, France, Italy and Belgium in examining the very serious financial questions involved in the position of Germany.

"The future *status* of the Tangier zone of Morocco, which has been a long-standing source of trouble, has been the subject of an Agreement between the delegates of the Powers principally concerned, which provides for the creation of an international *regime* and for the promotion of communications and trade.

"A Bill will be introduced to give effect to the Lausanne Treaty with Turkey. As soon as it has been passed, the Treaty will be ratified, and a new era of peaceful relations with Turkey will open.

"My Ministers, in common with the Dominion representatives, have been anxious to remove the difficulty with regard to the illicit importation of liquor into the United States, and have

made proposals for an agreement which is on the eve of conclusion, and which should further strengthen the happy relations prevailing between the two countries and peoples.

"It will continue to be My object to support by every means in My power the steady growth in influence of the League of Nations.

"The recent series of murders on the North-West Frontier of India by criminals who have sought refuge in Afghan territory or are Afghan subjects, has caused Me much concern. My Government have made vigorous representations to the Government of His Majesty The Amir, and I earnestly trust that these persons will be punished, and more satisfactory relations on the frontier be established, at a very early date.

"The recent Imperial Conferences marked a very definite progress in Imperial co-operation. More particularly was it found possible, without departure from the existing fiscal system in this country, to meet the wishes of the Dominions by a substantial extension of the principle of Imperial Preference established by the Conference of 1917 and in force since 1919. Proposals to give effect to the conclusions of both Conferences will be submitted to you.

"I welcome the opportunity that will be afforded by the British Empire Exhibition to increase the knowledge of the varied resources of My Empire and to stimulate inter-Imperial trade.

"Members of the House of Commons,

"Estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

"My Lords and Members of the House of Commons,

"While I am glad to note that the schemes for providing employment now in operation have had an appreciable effect during the last year in reducing the numbers of those actually

unemployed, the number still unable to find work causes Me the gravest concern. My Ministers recently laid before the country proposals which, in their judgment, would have contributed materially to a solution of this problem by affording to industry a greater measure of security in the home market and an improved outlet for its products in My Dominions overseas and in foreign countries; but these proposals were not accepted by the country.

"In these circumstances your assent will be invited to an extension and amendment of the Trade Facilities and Export Credit Schemes, to the proposal of the Imperial Economic Conference for expediting and assisting the execution of certain public enterprises throughout the Empire by the grant of financial aid from public funds, and to an extension of the contributions towards the cost of Public Utility Works, whether undertaken by local authorities or promoted by statutory and private corporations.

"You will also be asked to assist in providing work in the shipbuilding industry by the immediate construction of cruisers and auxiliary craft in anticipation of the Naval Programme.

"Steps will be taken to develop the existing system of Juvenile Unemployment Centres and to provide increased facilities for general and technical education.

"The condition of agriculture remains a source of serious anxiety. My Ministers propose to summon a conference representative of all those interested in agriculture, and of the various political parties, with the object of arriving at an agreed policy, by which the acreage of arable land may be maintained, and regular employment at an adequate wage secured for the agricultural worker.

"Bills will be introduced to improve the position of pre-war pensioners, and to deal with the discouragement of thrift involved in the present means limitation to the grant of old age pensions.

"You will be asked to develop the probationary system of dealing with offenders. Bills will be introduced to amend and consolidate the Factory and

Workshop Acts, to legitimize children born out of wedlock whose parents have subsequently married, and to amend the law relating to separation and maintenance orders.

"Under the Housing Act of last Session My Ministers have approved the erection of a large number of houses, both by local authorities and by private enterprise. The local authorities are being approached with a view to increased activity under those sections of the Act which enable the working population to become the owners of their homes.

"Measures will be laid before you to complete land purchase in Northern Ireland, and to guarantee the principal and interest of bonds issued by the Government of the Irish Free State under the Land Act recently passed in that Dominion.

"The obligation to alleviate hardship caused by the former disturbances in Ireland is one which is recognised by My Government and will continue to engage their active attention.

"Proposals will be submitted to you for the expansion of the Royal Air Force in connection with Home Defence.

"Preparations have also been made for measures dealing with the property and endowments of the Church of Scotland, the improvement of the road traffic of London, for the reform of the system of valuation and rating in England and Wales, and of rating in Scotland, for the improvement of the administration of civil and criminal justice, for making valid certain charges imposed during the War, and for the ascertainment of costs and profits in connection with the distribution of milk.

"And I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your deliberations."

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON:
According to the newspapers the representations to the Amir regarding the North-West Frontier of India have had a favourable result and the murder gang, I think, has now been surrendered.

Perhaps the noble Marquess will be able to tell us something on that point. It will be a great relief to everyone to know that those of our officials who are on the North-West Frontier are not to be exposed to the terrible risks which they have lately had to run and that the representations to the Amir have really had an effect in breaking up the murder gang—if that be so.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON): The next question that the noble Viscount asked was about Afghanistan. Here, although I am in general agreement with what he said, I think he was disposed, perhaps, to place the matter in a rather more favourable light than is actually the case at the present moment. It is not a case only of the murder of one person or of one set of persons. There have been several murders, and these murders have been committed, as the House, I think, knows, in that turbulent and disputed fringe between the British and Afghan territory, by persons, some of whom are Afghan subjects, some of whom belong to tribes who are nominally our subjects because they are within the Durand Line, but who, after the perpetration of outrages like these, are apt to run across the border in order to take shelter there, and who belong to tribes with whom the Amir himself finds it difficult altogether to quarrel because they receive subsidies from him, and their friendly attitude towards Afghanistan is an element of importance to him on his side of the frontier, just as it is to us upon ours.

What has happened has been that one of these gangs only has surrendered to the Afghan authorities—the gang that were responsible for the murder at Kohat in British territory, and the Afghan Government have undertaken to remove them to a remote part of Afghanistan and keep them under surveillance there. We shall, of course, expect the Afghan Government scrupulously to adhere to its undertaking in that respect, because it is not consistent with the laws of hospitality that prevail in those regions to expect that the Afghan Government will consent to give them up. But it now remains for the Amir—and that is my reason for saying that the case is not closed—to deal with the other murderers,

of whom there are two or three, if not more, other groups. When these things have been done the air will be cleared, and we may anticipate that peace will reign again upon the Frontier. So that, although the omens are, on the whole, encouraging, I would not like the noble Viscount or the House to pitch their expectations for the moment too high.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 12th February, 1924.

LORD OLIVIER.

The Right Honourable Sir Sydney Haldane Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India in Council, having been created Baron Olivier of Ramsden, in the County of Oxford—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 13th February, 1924.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:

Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 14th February, 1924.

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL. [H.L.]

Presented, read 1st, and referred to the Examiners.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 20th February, 1924.

PREFERENTIAL TARIFFS.

EARL BEAUCHAMP rose to call attention to the high duties levied upon British goods under the preferential tariffs when

they enter the self-governing Dominions and to the Indian tariffs; and to move for Papers.

There is just a reference to India, which perhaps hardly comes into the scope of this Question, and, therefore, I will only touch upon it in the briefest possible way. I ask the noble Lord whether it is not accurate to say that though, of course, we get no preferential duties upon any goods going into India from this country, India has not, as a matter of fact, given us any preference, although she is at this time enjoying preference on anything which she sends to this country and upon which at this moment duties are being raised. The fact is that while we give India a preference we get none from her.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, I wish to add one word with regard to India. As in the case of the self-governing Dominions, the Government of India is autonomous in this matter. As the noble Earl has said the Government of India decided at present to accord no preference. In the Tariff Commission which sat in India and reported in 1922 no indication was given of any inclination on the part of those interested in India to grant any preference. The present Indian tariff is historically, and still ostensibly, a tariff for revenue, and, that being so, no concession or preference could be made without finding some alternative source of revenue. A Tariff Committee, however, is to be set up to consider the question of altering the principles upon which the tariff of India is settled rather in the direction of a protective tariff, and incidentally, in connection with the deliberations of that Committee, the question of giving a preference may, doubtless, be raised.

But I ought to add that, so far as I can judge, the advantages of the preferences now granted to the Government of India under the existing scheme are not sufficient to offer a very great temptation to the Government of India to make any considerable alteration of their tariff system in the direction of preference, unless a line were taken which, I think the noble Earl will agree with me, is not likely to be taken, and a preference were given on a tariff affecting foodstuffs and other products which are the principal exports of India. That is at present

Earl Beauchamp.

the position of India so far as I can indicate it, and no amount of discussion with the noble Earl as to the wisdom or expediency of any line of preferential tariff in India would affect the question, because, as the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies has said, it is a matter which rests entirely with the Government of India. So far, however, as any information can be given in Papers, we shall be most glad to do anything we can to meet any desire of the noble Earl.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 26th February, 1924.

INDIA.

THE EARL OF CLARENDON: My Lords, I desire to ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any statement to make with regard to affairs in India?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, I have been long enough an observer of the proceedings of your Lordships' House really not to have required the very kind assurance which was given to us on these Benches a few days ago by the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition that what we had to say would receive the most courteous and patient attention from your Lordships. I am afraid that, to-day, I am going to trespass more than I should have hoped to do upon your Lordships' patience, because I have, unfortunately, lost considerable portions of my voice, and am not sure of being able to pick them up in the right place, so that I am afraid my statement may be, in parts, somewhat painful for you Lordships to listen to, but I will do my best.

I will come at once to the point. The affairs of India are giving His Majesty's Government at the present time very great anxiety. In speaking of these matters I am speaking in a House which contains many Indian administrators, and they will know that in what I say I necessarily fail to refer to many considerations that I might bring to mind, and will also recognise that, in saying some things, I remind them of matters with which they are perfectly familiar. I have to pursue the course which I shall

choose in the logical manner in which it has occurred to myself, trusting that my deficiencies may be made allowance for, and be supplemented by the great indulgence of your Lordships. I wish to deal first with the history of this matter.

On August 20, 1917, a declaration of policy was made in the House of Commons by the then Secretary of State for India as follows:

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral portion of the British Empire."

This was incorporated in the Preamble of the Government of India Act, 1919. This declaration was coupled with the following proviso:

"I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent in which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility."

Elections were held in 1920. The Indian Home Rule Party, the Swarajists, abstained from taking part in those Elections under the influence of Mr. Gandhi. In order to show what was the feeling of the Party to which I belong at that time, which is also their feeling now, I will ask leave to quote the words used by my right hon. friend the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in the House of Commons:

"To my mind there has been no more lamentable blunder made by the Indian people than their refusal, under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi, to go on the Councils. The experiment was, therefore, not started under the complete conditions which were contemplated."

Some exception has been taken to the wording of the proviso by Indian Home Rulers as ill-chosen. I will deal with this criticism later with a view to a better understanding of how I think the proviso should be interpreted, merely observing now that there seems to me some excuse for some of the objections which have been taken to it.

In December, 1923, fresh Elections were held for the Provincial Legislative Council and the Indian Legislative Assembly. The Swarajist Party decided on this occasion to take part in the Elections, and to run candidates. On October 11 the Party issued, over the signature of Mr. Motilal Nehru, an election manifesto in which the basis of their programme is set forth as follows:

"The Swarajya Party believes that the guiding motive of the British in governing India is to serve the selfish interests of their own country and that the so-called reforms are a mere blind to further the said interests under the pretence of a granting responsible Government to India, the real object being to continue the exploitation of the unlimited resources of the country by keeping Indians permanently in a subservient position to Britain and denying them at home and abroad the most elementary rights of citizenship. It is daily becoming abundantly clear that the British, while professing equality of treatment, are in practice subjecting the whole Indian nation to humiliation and insult in all parts of the world where British influence is supreme. The Party notes with pride and satisfaction that the people of India are resolved to submit no longer to the national humiliation imposed upon them by the autocratic will of their British rulers and in full consonance with the Congress expresses its emphatic opinion that Indians have no option but to continue to carry on a policy of progressive non-violent non-co-operation with the present system of Government until it is radically changed in accordance with the will of the people expressed through their chosen representatives."

The practical programme of the Party was then thus laid down:

"The demand to be made by the members of the Party on entering the Legislative Assembly will in effect be that the right of the people of India to control the existing machinery and system of government shall forthwith be conceded and given effect to by the British Government and the British Parliament.

"The immediate objective of the Party is the speedy attainment of full Dominion status; that is, the securing of the right to frame a Constitution adopting such machinery and system as are most suited to the conditions of the country and to the genius of the people.

"They will, when they are elected, present on behalf of the country its legitimate demands as formulated by the Party as soon as the elections are over, and ask for their acceptance and fulfilment within a reasonable time by the Government.

"If the demands are not granted to the satisfaction of the Party, occasion will then

arise for the elected members belonging to the Party to adopt a policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction within the Councils with a view to make government, through the Councils, impossible, but before adopting such a policy the representatives of the Part in the Councils will, if necessary, strengthen themselves by obtaining an express mandate of the electorates in this behalf.

"In no case will any member of the Party accept office."

On that programme Elections were held and in certain of the Presidencies this Swarajist Party obtained strong representation, notably in Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, and in the Central Provinces, and so strong was the representation that, with the assistance of the less outspoken Liberal Members they were able to command a majority in the Councils. The result has been, as your Lordships are well aware, that in Bengal and the Central Provinces, and, as I am informed by a telegram I have received to-day, in Bombay, obstructive tactics are being pursued in accordance with that programme. Votes of "No confidence" are moved and carried, and the Swarajist Party refuse to take office. Moderate and non-controversial Bills like the Protection of Children Bill in Bombay are thrown out by the Swarajist Party.

I feel sure your Lordships will agree with me that the belief expressed in that election manifesto, which was signed by Mr. Motilal Nehru, who was one of the most prominent speakers of the Swarajist Party in the proceedings last week in the National Assembly, is a mistaken belief, an ill-informed and ill-inferred belief, and an unjustifiable belief. When I saw that extraordinary pronouncement, one of the first things I had to ask myself was: What are the reasons, what is the ostensible justification, for the expression by presumably responsible and intelligent politicians of such a view with regard to the purpose and intentions of the British Government and people concerning India? I took pains to inform myself by communications with the Viceroy, by discussions with my public advisers and by letters which I have received from persons interested in India and reformers in India. I asked as many as I could of the Indian Reform Party in this country in order to ascertain what were the ostensible and arguable grounds for such an uncompromising pronouncement. I found that the grounds,

Lord Olivier.

the reasons, were many and various, and I will make a brief survey of the causes, reasonable and unreasonable, which were advanced for the feeling of mistrust.

Let me give your Lordships first some general reasons supplied to me by a very high authority. He says:

"Alleged favouritism of predominant British services, and appointment of Lee Commission contrary to the wishes of the Legislature.

"Failure of the reforms to finance nation-building departments such as education.

"Slow decrease in military expenditure.

"Alleged favouritism of British manufacture in store purchase policy.

"Measures taken to punish and repress disorder even when the latter has a political aspect."

The words "political aspect" are interpreted in an extremely wide and liberal spirit. I find, again and again, certain references recurring to things which do rankle very generally in the minds of the Indian Home Rule Party. The first is a matter to which I regret I have to refer in your Lordships' House, but I am giving you what are the grounds of mistrust, reasonable or unreasonable.

One general cause of distrust in the minds of the Indian Home Rule Party is the Resolution passed by your Lordships' House on the Motion of the noble and learned Viscount, Lord Finlay, on the action taken by the Government of India in regard to General Dyer. I have read the debates and also looked through the Division List, and I know what many of your Lordships think on that matter. I want to take this opportunity, on behalf of myself and the Party to which I belong, to say that I believe the criticism of the Government of India's action passed by your Lordships' House does not represent the opinion of the great majority of my fellow countrymen. It may seem presumptuous for me to speak on the subject, but in my official life I have been connected with parts of the world where riots frequently occur, and I have been concerned in two, in one of which one of my dearest friends lost his life and from the other I have a large ridge on the back of my skull by the impact of what is locally known as a "rock stone." In both of those cases life had to be taken. I speak, as all administrators speak, with a full appreciation of the rules which should govern the protection of

life in such matters, and the first impression I received of the Amritsar action was that if it had been taken by an officer of my own it would have led to his immediate suspension from duty.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: The Coalition Government was in office at the time of the Amritsar occurrence.

LORD OLIVIER: I beg your pardon. The Conservative Party was in office when the Swarajist manifesto was written, and the Conservative Party had the imputation laid upon them, owing to the Resolution passed by your Lordships, that many of your Lordships were sympathisers.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: The Conservative Party was not in office at the time of the Dyer incident, or the debate in this House which took place in 1920. The Coalition Government was then in office.

LORD OLIVIER: I entirely agree with the noble Marquess. I was discussing what were the reasons for the extraordinary pronouncement in the Swarajist manifesto of October last, and one of the reasons was that as the Conservative Government was then in office the Indian people have imputed to them sympathy with the Resolution passed by this House. I hope I make myself clear. I am speaking of the causes of the distrust expressed in the manifesto of last October. But, according to the papers I have been reading lately, that soreness crops up again in connection with the deplorable incident at Jaito in which many Sikhs were killed last week. It is obviously one of the unfortunate things which unjustly, as I believe, have prejudiced many Indians against the attitude of the English people.

In the second place there is the injudicious language used by Mr. Lloyd George in a speech in Parliament, which is known throughout India as the "steel frame speech," in which he compared—quite justly, so far as the present time is concerned—the Indian Civil Service to the steel frame upon the stability of which the whole structure of Indian government rests. I do not think any exception can be taken to that phrase under present conditions, but he went on to say, being carried away by his

enthusiastic admiration for the Indian Civil Service,—

"Whatever we may do in the way of strengthening the Government of India, one institution we will not interfere with, will not deprive of its functions and privileges, and that is the British Civil Service in India."

This was directly contrary to the statement of August 20, 1917, which said that we should progressively Indianise the Services, and that the position of the British Civil Service in India would be modified. Obviously, if you are contemplating the establishment of self-government in India, it is, in the long run, impossible to say that you will maintain intact, as Mr. Lloyd George promised that he would maintain intact, the Indian Civil Service. It was a prediction which appeared to be a departure in policy from that which His Majesty's Government had already laid down. It was seized upon, and is constantly quoted in India as the "steel frame speech."

This is one consideration which is constantly pointed out when I ask Indians why they consider that the British Government has changed its policy. They say: "Mr. Lloyd George told us so." I do not know whether that is an adequate reason for believing that there has been a change of policy, because we have it on very good authority that the speeches of the gentleman to whom I have referred are sometimes adapted to the immediate purpose in hand, and the immediate purpose in hand on this occasion was the encouragement and enheartening of that splendid Civil Service of which he was speaking and which he was eulogising. Unfortunately, the other party to the contract was listening, and although it is possible to make these encouraging statements to two different parties when they are in two different rooms, and to suppose that when they come together you can get rid of the idea which you implanted in two different minds, it cannot be done when the speech is made in Parliament—because it is immediately telegraphed all over India—and when it is in contradiction of a statement which has already been made in Parliament.

Mr. Lloyd George's speech was injudicious, though I do not suppose for a moment that he intended or could possibly have meant that it was the intention of

his Government—as it certainly is not the intention of this Government—to stop the Indianisation of the Indian Civil Service, and to establish for all time in India the British administrative organisation of the Indian Civil Service. The declaration of August 20, 1917, definitely promised a transition in that respect. That is one cause of mistrust—an unfortunate and, I think your Lordships will agree with me, on the whole an irrational and not well inferred cause.

In the third place there was the certification of the Salt Tax last year. The Government of India decided that it was necessary that they should balance their Budget, and that they could not balance their Budget without doubling the Salt Tax. When the Assembly threw out the Resolution doubling the Salt Tax, the Government of India had to certify, as is provided in the case of certain Crown Colonies as well as of India, that this was essential in the public interest and that the Resolution must become law. That produced an unfortunate effect in India, as that kind of action always does, in my own experience, whenever it has ever been had recourse to in Colonies. It has been held to be a direct slap in the face, and a stultification of what elected members in India and elsewhere consider to be the first principle of democratic government, that you shall not have taxation without representation, and that the representatives of the people shall decide in matters of taxation.

The unfortunate part of the matter was that there was a double prejudice. I remember that many years ago I was brought up to regard the French Revolution as having been brought about by the imposition of the odious *gabelle*, or Salt Tax. I think most of us have it ingrained in our bones to regard a Salt Tax as a peculiarly iniquitous and horrible form of taxation. That is certainly very widely held in India, because every woman who goes to buy a farthing's worth of salt in the market, and the next week has to pay another half-farthing finds that the taxation has been increased, and you have millions of people affected by a tax which, although the amount is infinitesimally small, is felt throughout the country, and has produced a real popular feeling against the action of the Viceroy in overriding, as he is held to have

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done, the first principles of the new Constitution.

The fourth and most important consideration is what is known as the Kenya business. I hope my noble friend on my right will not think that I am going to say anything which need cause him any apprehension or uneasiness. He may be regarding me as the patient in the dentist's chair regards the dentist, but I assure him that I certainly shall not hurt him. But I entertain certain feelings in regard to the Kenya difficulty which I feel bound to express in this House. I was associated last summer with a number of persons, Members of Parliament in the other House and others, who had been much interested for many years in the fate of African natives, and it was, if I may say so, an enormous satisfaction to us when the noble Duke, the Duke of Devonshire, after considering the whole Kenya question, definitely laid down for the government of Kenya Colony the principle that had been adopted in the Covenant of the League of Nations for the government of mandated territories, thus extending that principle to the British Empire. This is a great and lasting achievement on the part of the noble Duke, for which all who are interested in native affairs are profoundly thankful. He said that we should administer the Kenya country, not primarily in the interests of the white settler and not primarily in the interests of Indians, but primarily in the interests of, and as trustee for, the natives of Kenya Colony.

Certain questions were raised with regard to the privileges of white persons and of Indians; demands neither of white settlers nor of Indians with regard to the franchise were acceded to, and that which is practically a Crown Colony system of government was established whereby the Crown and its nominees were put in supreme control. Three decisions were taken which Indians have felt very grievously injurious and insulting to themselves. The first was the comparatively minor matter of the reservation of land in the Highlands and the prohibition of its sale to Indians. I do not think this can be considered to be in any way a really substantial grievance. The second was the statement that immigration regulations must be laid down in order to protect the natives of Kenya against the

economic competition of the natives of India. No immigration legislation has at present been passed or adopted. At the time when this immigration legislation was promised there had been a considerable increase of Indian immigrants, which really only represented a return of the efflux that had taken place during the war, and the Colonial Government had some reason for alarm.

The local authorities drafted an Immigration Ordinance which was sent home to the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office considered the provisions of this draft Ordinance to be quite unnecessarily drastic, and said the draft Ordinance would not do. They referred it back for a fresh Ordinance, and there the matter stands at the present time. Meanwhile, under the agreement made at the Imperial Conference, an Indian Committee has been appointed which is to deal with the interests of Indians in the Dominions, and this Committee will have an opportunity of considering and making representations on any immigration legislation which may be introduced.

With regard to the economic effects of Indian immigration in Kenya, I have given attention to the matter, and I went into the controversy last spring. With regard to Africa, I have been all my life primarily concerned with the interest of Africans and the negro races, and I have no prejudice whatever in favour of admitting Indians in injurious competition with African natives—rather the reverse. I must say, however, from my own investigations into the subject, that I have never seen any evil results manifested in the Kenya Colony, or elsewhere, on the interests of African natives by the immigration of Indian settlers. My experience has been that their interests do not conflict, but that almost universally the Indian settlers are of value to the communities which they enter. Consequently my own feeling is, and always has been, that I should like, on behalf of the Government of India, to be sure that a very sound and strong case has been made out before agreeing to the restrictions upon Indian immigration into Africa, and that if there is any economic argument in support of such a restriction I should like it to be fully considered.

I am sure that that course will be taken by the Secretary of State for the Colonies

and by the Under-Secretary. I am sure that they are going to approach this question of the necessity of restriction upon immigration with perfectly fair and straightforward minds, and not with any prejudice or with any desire to exclude Indians, but with an absolute determination to test the matter on its proved economic merits. If it be proved that Indian immigration is deleterious to the natives of Kenya, then I cannot imagine that Indians would repudiate what they now support—namely, the doctrine that these territories are first to be administered in the interests of their native inhabitants. I have absolute confidence in the Secretary of State for the Colonies and in the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, that they are going to be as careful in doing justice in this matter as I, who speak on behalf of the interests of India, could possibly desire them to be.

Then there is the matter of the franchise, which has caused the greatest consternation and irritation in India because we have established in Kenya a differential franchise as between Indians and white men, neither of them being original denizens of the country. That, of course, is a grievance against which Indians in the Dominion of South Africa have been struggling for years. It is the grievance which has brought Mr. Gandhi into being an influential factor in Indian affairs. It is a new departure in our Crown Colonies. The Crown Colony of British Guiana, which desires to have Indian immigration, has published a statement that there is no differentiation against Indians in that Colony. Before the White Paper was issued we had a Report known as the Wood-Winterton Report, and that Report did not recommend discrimination. They recommended the principle which we have always adopted in our West Indian and West African Colonies—namely, equal franchise for all persons of equal qualification—and they were quite prepared to say that if you have a large number of illiterate and ill-educated people in your Colonies you should have such a franchise as will exclude those who are not fitted to exercise it.

That was the principle with which I myself agreed, and with which I sympathise, but the noble Duke, the Duke of Devonshire, was not able, in arranging the compromise settlement, to see his way to adopt that. He adopted the

principle which would always, I am afraid, be a cause of soreness to Indians and to myself, because I associate myself entirely with what my predecessor Lord Peel said—namely, that this kind of discrimination between franchises is one of the things which are most dangerous to the unity of the British Empire. This principle I have held all my life, and if you want to disrupt and break up the British Empire the way to do it is to make this discrimination between one race and another on the ground of colour, and not on the ground of qualification.

However, my Lords, I want to make an appeal to Indians interested in this matter, and to those who feel with them, to have a little patience. Crown Colony government is not an ideal constitution. In Crown Colony government, it appears to me, it is not at all necessary you should expect to have exactly the same principles of franchise as you would have under a clearly constituted democratic government. Its representations are not arranged for the purposes of control, because the elected members cannot control the Government. The Secretary of State controls the Government. These representations are conceived in order that the various sections of the population may be adequately represented. I have myself served in a Colony, to which I went owing to the recommendations of an eminent financier, where all the elected members of the Council had resigned their appointments. I had to conduct a whole Session without any elected members. Then there was a fresh Election and elected members came back.

In Kenya the attitude has been taken that the Indian members of the Council would not vote for the new Constitution Bill, and will not come into the new Council when constituted, as representative members. I am convinced that that is politically, and from the point of view of common sense, an unwise policy. You must look at the fact that Crown Colony constitution is not a satisfactory thing. The purpose of it is to give representation to various interests, and any interest which does not take advantage of such representation as is given to it is doing harm to the interests of its constituents. The way to advance is to go back into the Council and to work in the Council,

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to show that you and your constituents are fit members—not to take offence and to say: "We will not play." I feel strongly that the discrimination is injurious. But still, having regard to the purposes of such a transitional Constitution as that of Kenya Colony, I do deplore the attitude that is being encouraged by Indian Swarajists. That is how the position rests. The Indian Committee which has been appointed will, on this point, as on others, have every opportunity of making such representations as it may think right to His Majesty's Government, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies will fully consider those representations. I have now indicated the principal difficulties which I find to be rankling in the minds of Indians.

I return to the proceedings in the Indian Legislative Assembly. The opening of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly took the form of a Resolution moved by Mr. Rangachariar claiming the immediate grant of full responsible government to India. An amendment moved by Mr. Motilal Nehru, the principal signatory of that document from which I have quoted, was adopted:

"(a) This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council to take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full responsible Government in India—"

Your Lordships are aware that the Government of India Act provides that, not later than 1929, a Royal Commission shall be sent out in order to consider what further modifications can be made in Indian Government. This Resolution claims an immediate overhaul in the system of government. It continues:—

"and for the said purpose

"(b) To summon at an early date a representative round table conference to recommend, with due regard for the protection of the rights and interests of the important minorities, a scheme of constitution for India, and

"(c) After dissolving the Central Legislature, to place the said scheme for approval before a newly-elected Indian Legislature for its approval, and submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a Statute."

That, of course, was an entire departure from the principles laid down in the Government of India Act and from the

recommendations of the Joint Select Committee of Lords and Commons upon that Act.

The Home Member in the Indian Legislative Assembly, with the concurrence of His Majesty's Government, took this line: We stand, for the present, by the provisions of the Government of India Act. It must be admitted that no proper opportunity has been given for the working of that Act, but it has been in working, in the hands of the Legislatures, for three years. Let us first examine what are the inconveniences, what are the faults in the working of that Act which can be remedied without any fresh legislation, what are the complaints of its working as an instrument for the efficient carrying on of the government—not as an ideal Constitution but for the purposes for which it is constituted, a transitional instrument for carrying on the public services. Let us first examine these. We will then go on (Sir Malcolm Hailey promised) to investigate what modifications can be made in the provisions of the present Act by rules which may be made under the Act, which rules will require the consent of Parliament, either on a Resolution or by being laid before Parliament. If that course were taken it would remove, or should remove, so far as possible, any working defects which might give an excuse for non-co-operation with the present scheme of the Government of India Act.

We could not see our way to go farther than that. It appeared to us that to accept, or to indicate that we might be prepared to accept, on the recommendation of a round table conference, a new scheme for now establishing full responsible Government in India, three years only after the institution of a scheme of reform which was adopted because we were convinced that the establishment of full responsible Government would be worse than perilous, would be big with disaster to the peoples of India, and, when the purposes which that transitional scheme was designed to fulfil have not been availed of, would be a responsibility which His Majesty's Government are not prepared to accept. There, then, at present is how the matter rests. We have had a full debate in the Assembly, and the Home Member for India has stated very fully the views of His Majesty's Government.

I should like to read to you Sir Malcolm Hailey's observations. Speaking on February 18, he said:

"We have again considered the position very carefully, and I am anxious to emphasise that, in what I say, I speak with the full authority of His Majesty's Government. We still hold to the position I took up on behalf of the Government. Before His Majesty's Government are able to consider the question of amending the Constitution, as distinct from such amendment of the Act as may be required to rectify any administrative imperfections, there must be full investigation of any defects or difficulties which may have arisen in the working of the transitional Constitution now in force. . . .

In 1919, Parliament, after the fullest consideration, laid down a scheme transitional in its nature but, nevertheless, carefully devised with a view to effecting steps necessary for progressive realisation of ideals embodied in the Preamble of the Act. It is not to be supposed that the British people would be lightly inclined to consider a change in that Constitution, and it is bound to concentrate attention for the present on such imperfections in working as may have been disclosed. . . . If our inquiries into the defects of the working of the Act show the feasibility and possibility of any advance within the Act—that is to say, by use of the rule-making power already provided by Parliament under the Statute—we are willing to make recommendations to this effect; but if our inquiries show that no advance is possible without amending the Constitution then the question of advance must be left as an entirely open and separate issue on which the Government is in no way committed."

That is the statement of Sir Malcolm Hailey, very carefully framed, and I thought it well to read it to your Lordships' House, so that you might know exactly what has been the position of the Government of India and His Majesty's Government in this matter.

Now I want to expound very shortly, if I can, what is the position of His Majesty's present Government towards this question. His Majesty's present Government, as Sir Malcolm Hailey stated in his observations, are in sympathy with the purpose of the Home Rule Party in India. They are in sympathy with the purposes of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms; that is to say, progress towards Home Rule. But their view is that unless a Parliamentary system is welded together by predominant common interests from its foundation in the electorate upwards no theoretical constitution that may be arrived at by a concordat among leaders of divergent

interests, for the mere purpose of establishing an ostensibly democratic form, can prevent it from flying asunder. This has, so far, been found to be the case in Ireland, largely because the dividing power of difference of religion is stronger than the uniting force of common political interests.

This is very much more the case in India, as I need not labour to point out to your Lordships' House. The concordats for common political action which Hindu leaders have recently made with Mahomedan leaders have displeased their followers on both sides and have merely exacerbated mutual intolerance and antagonism—exhibited by an increase of cow-killing and the increased playing of bands outside of Moslem mosques—between whole sections of the community for whom these divergent religions are a much stronger moving and guiding force than any common political interest. When these religious rivalries are aroused we have seen again and again, and quite recently in Malabar, for instance, how uncontrollably and murderously they act. The interests of the small enfranchised class of Hindus in maintaining their position and distinction over the outcaste masses are infinitely stronger than the common political interests of the two classes. The interests of Moslem leaders, as again we have recently seen, tend to be co-terminous rather with Islam than with either India or the British Commonwealth. Mr. Gandhi has faced this fact that the predominance of religious over secular interests in his countrymen is fundamental, and builds his policy on it.

I am glad, and the Party that I represent are glad, that Mr. Gandhi has been released from prison, because it is repugnant to human feeling that a man of his character should be treated as a criminal. But the terrible practical reactions of his philosophically innocent teachings merely illustrate the excesses into which the Indian popular temperament is prone to be driven by any such ferment. We have had our precedents in the rebellions of evangelicalism in England and in Europe. Mr. Gandhi denounces and condemns the whole idea of Western democracy on which the Swaraj leaders, or, at any rate, the Hindu section of them, are working, and on which we have been trying to work for India in the Morley-Minto and Montagu-

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Chelmsford reforms. Not less completely do Mr. Roy, of Berlin, and his Communist missionaries from the Bolshevik school at Tashkent condemn and denounce the bourgeois republicanism of the Swaraj movement, demanding the dictatorship of the proletariat and the emancipation of the outcaste and lower caste masses.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Lord, but is he reading from any document or is he giving us the considered opinions of His Majesty's Government at this stage of his speech?

LORD OLIVIER: I took the liberty of throwing this into form so that I might not make any slip. This is my own statement.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: It is the opinion of His Majesty's Government?

LORD OLIVIER: Yes. All that I have read from this paper is the opinion of His Majesty's Government. To continue my observations on this point: Among these three we have pinned our faith to a programme of constitutional democracy, but we claim to know, by centuries of experience in Europe and America, the laws and conditions indispensable for the stable working of that system, which is not native to India, and it is perfectly plain to us that those conditions are not at present established in India, and cannot be established at a few months notice by the deliberation of a round-table conference or the premature appointment of a Commission under the Government of India Act.

I would like for a moment to make an *excursus* into an analogical historical survey. I belong to a Party, and I have belonged to that Party for forty years, which has achieved a certain amount of political success. The noble Duke, the Duke of Northumberland, who spoke the other day in this House, deplored the fact that the precepts of the venerable Mr. Hyndman had not been followed by that Party. The precepts of the venerable Mr. Hyndman, who was the first missionary of Socialism in this country, were practically that the Socialist movement should go on until the day was ripe, and that then there should be a revolution and a dictatorship of the proletariat. The Party to which I belong defeated Mr.

Hyndman. The Party to which I belong, being part of that international gang of revolutionaries, the Second International, has been able to exercise, I think, a considerable amount of influence upon the Party programmes of Socialism in the rest of Europe. I remember that about thirty years ago I was at an International Congress in Zurich at which many of those terrible revolutionaries were present. There was a British deputation of about fifty, of whom some thirty were British trade unionists, four were Members of Parliament, and there were Mr. Pickard of the Durham miners, Mr. Davies of the Birmingham Brass Founders, Mr. Councillor Hobson of Sheffield, Mr. Bernard Shaw, with my humble self as secretary of the British Section. There was also a gentleman whom the noble Viscount, Lord Cecil, no doubt knows—Mr. F. J. Wheelan, who is a member of that international gang of revolutionaries which is now occupied in endeavouring to subordinate arms to arbitration and another gang of revolutionaries which is trying to do the same in regard to industry.

The Party to which I belong did not start off as did the earlier Socialists. The first thing it had to have was an intelligent and understanding constituency which would know what they were driving at and would support unitedly their representatives in Parliament. Here, as in all our political developments, we did not begin at the top but at the bottom. We saw that there could be no Parliamentary stability whatever and no progress in any kind of change or revolution unless the Parliamentary constitution and representation were based upon a real, vital, organic constituency of common interests and understanding, which, as I have said, is singularly absent in India.

We say that it is impossible for the Indian people, for the Indian politicians, at once to leap into the saddle and administer without disastrous religious and other dissensions the most ideal constitution which might be framed. When we contemplate the interval which shall occur before the revision of the Constitution, we do not look at it in this way. We do not say—I mention that some offence has been taken at this—: "We will make you a nice little half-way Constitution, we will put in nice Governors and intelligent officials to show you how

to work British Parliamentary institutions." We say: "You have to arrive at the other side of the river. You have to arrive at responsible Government. We provide you, according to the best of our abilities, with what we think, and what many of you think so far as we can make out, is a seaworthy boat. The only way you can get to the other side of that river is by getting into the boat and rowing. It is no use whatever to stand on the bank, to refuse to get into the boat, and to say: 'We are not going to go anywhere without responsible Dominion Government.'"

This is a case of *solvitur ambulando*. You must get into the boat. If you want to make a political constitution stable you must become a member of Parliament and have a constituency. You must learn to work with persons who differ from you without at once calling for a holy war from your followers—an experiment, however, which has been largely followed in Ireland, where they resorted to methods which seem likely to be popular in India. There is, of course, that danger, and it is the view of the Labour Party that you must build up not only your political party, but your political constituency. That can only be done by Parliamentary experience ranging over a certain number of years.

Before I pass from this terrible danger of religious fanaticism, to which I referred as being dominant in India, I want to mention one very painful occurrence which has been brought to my notice in the last few days, and upon which I think the House would like to have some information—namely, the late recrudescence of killing and of conflict in the Punjab among the Sikhs. I will deal with this matter as briefly as I can, but it is one about which your Lordships will want to know so far as can be ascertained, the facts. The Sikhs are a religious denomination. They are not a racial denomination, though they predominantly belong to a race which is a very ancient stock, one of the most ancient European races, according to Professor Arthur Keith, and one of the finest both in brain conformation and in bone conformation of any of the races that have ever appeared on the earth. I know no Englishman who has come in contact with the Sikhs, and who has not the greatest admiration and affection for them. They

are people of a fine, ancient and noble race, and they are one of those ancient and noble races which have, if I may say so, a constitutional apprehension of God, and of the spiritual life. They are profoundly religious.

Some little time ago the Sikhs had a religious revival. They found themselves in this position, that the shrines that had been established for the reading of their holy Scriptures, and for the worship of God, had in later times fallen into the hands of corrupt priests, the Mahants, who had taken possession of the properties and annexed the shrines and were abusing their authority for the purposes of gain and of dissipation. The Sikh religious community clamoured for a reform. They formed themselves into a Puritan reform movement. It is unfortunate that the Sikhs were not placed when their reformation came as we were. If this thing had taken place in this country it would have been solved without difficulty. The reigning Prince would have placed himself at the head of the reform movement, he would have declared himself a defender of the faith, and himself would have confiscated the disputed properties and would have bestowed them upon his principal political supporters. The time has passed when that simple mode of procedure can be adopted, and such a method did not occur to the authorities of the Punjab.

The Puritan Sikhs took the law into their own hands, and following a very august example, they themselves said: "It is written in our Scriptures our house shall be called a house of prayer; these men have made it a den of thieves"; and they went into the temple and cleared them out. They broke down the tables of the money changers, and the seats of those who sold doves, and turned out the prostitutes and the other sources of gain that the Mahants were using in these places. That was very simple, puritan, direct action. That kind of action necessarily led to violence. In the first place the Mahants themselves suffered violence, and, in the second place, when one of the Mahants saw what was coming upon them, he organised a band of followers with long staves, kerosene tins, torches and fire arms, and lay in wait for the people that were coming to turn him out. When those people had come into the temple they shot down and massacred a large

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number of these Sikhs, and they poured kerosene upon them and burnt them—a very horrible thing.

Representations have been sent home. I have seen a telegram to the Prime Minister, and I have seen a long printed document sent to Members of Parliament, reporting this atrocity and laying it upon the shoulders of the Government as having supported the Mahant, ignoring altogether the fact that the Mahant was immediately criminally prosecuted and transported. That was carefully left out of the record and of the statement sent here to the Prime Minister, apparently by a responsible person. However, the Government took action, and very reasonable action. The Government said: "Let us establish a Sikh Board of Control, which shall be made the repository of all the interests of the Sikh religion and of the property of the Sikhs, so that these temples may be administered in the interest of the Sikh religion." That law was passed, but it remained a dead letter. Why did it remain a dead letter? Because the Sikh movement had been laid hold of by the political movement at Amritsar, which is the centre, as your Lordships are aware, of revolutionary propaganda and disturbance.

To cut a long story short, this last tragedy was directly engineered in order to create a fracas between the Government and the Sikhs, so that it could be said the British desired to repeat the tragedy of Amritsar and shoot down the honest, religious Sikhs. Excuse was taken of the fact that the Maharajah of Nabha had been deposed—no, not exactly deposed. The Maharajah of Nabha was a profligate and vicious ruler who entirely ignored the interest of his country for many years. We did not interfere. He then committed outrages upon the subjects of a neighbouring Maharajah, and the latter brought an action against him. The matter was judicially dealt with, the whole record of the Maharajah of Nabha was gone into, and it was intimated to him that he should pay compensation to his neighbour, and should demit his office in favour of his son, his son being placed under a regency. The people of Nabha were perfectly content with this.

They knew that they had got a good riddance, but the central revolutionary committee at Amritsar laid hold of this

and—I have seen the newspapers—deliberately represented that this was an act of oppression on the part of the British Government who wished to depose and destroy a patriotic Sikh chief, and that the British Government were intending to desecrate the shrines of the Sikh religion in Nabha. They therefore organised a movement from a hundred miles or so away. They sent instructions to the religious jathas, the simple-minded puritans, that the shrines of their religion were being outraged, and that they must go in pilgrimage and claim their right of praying and reading the Scriptures in these shrines at Jaito. The pilgrims themselves knew not why they came. They said: "These are the orders of the committee. We are to act under the orders of the committee. It is part of our Sikh law that we must obey the laws of our spiritual superiors." Five hundred pilgrims who were non-resisters went, and about 6,000 peasants and others. They went on a pilgrimage to Jaito in order to read their Scriptures. They were informed that they would not all be allowed in the shrine together, but only fifty at a time, for the purpose of making their devotions. They refused to accept this term to enter fifty at a time.

The pilgrims themselves pressed on towards the shrine, and the band of 6,000 opened fire on the police and troops drawn up in front of the approach. The result was this deplorable incident in which again State troops and police have had to fire on a crowd of innocent and religious-minded people stirred up by a small revolutionary committee with whom they had no actual connection whatever. If that kind of thing can be done for political purposes, if the religious instinct of a people can be traded upon for political and revolutionary purposes in that way, is it to be supposed that ambitious politicians under a perfectly liberal constitution are not going to appeal to religious fears and feelings in the pursuit of their policies? That appears to me to be an incident of what is repeatedly done in India—namely, that religious feelings are traded upon in order to serve political purposes.

In what I have said I have been forced to omit all reference to large sections of the aspect of present Indian problems which are of immense importance. One of them at least I must not

be suspected of having overlooked. It is inevitable when a Home Rule movement springs up in a country whose administration has been foreign, that hostility and injustice should be shown towards the agents of the hitherto ruling Power. It is advanced uncompromisingly that the British have no right in India. The right of British statesmen, public servants, merchants and industrialists to be in India to-day lies in the fact that they have made the India of to-day, and that no Home Rule or national movement could have been possible had it not been for their work. The Indian Home Rule Party have adopted, and we have joined with them in adopting, the methods of British administration. Our statesmen and our Indian public servants are loyally co-operating in the purpose of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. I have referred to what I thought was the regrettable lack of limitation in what Mr. Lloyd George said in his "steel frame speech" with regard to the Indian Service. He appeared to forecast the maintenance and perpetuity of British Service in India. It is, I think, impossible to associate this idea with the ultimate idea of Indian nationalism and responsible government.

But, in the transition stage from the present to the future, the loyalty and devotion to Indian interests of the British element in the public Services is as indispensable to the efficient working of any form of constitution in the public interests as is that Parliamentary co-operation on the part of the unofficial classes which I have appealed to the Sawarj Party to give. All my life I have been a public servant and administrator rather than a politician. But I have written much and have exercised perhaps some influence as a politician in the direction of a constitutional development which has placed me in your Lordships' House. So far as I have any qualifications for my present office it is because of this double education, and from myself at any rate the achievements and the continuing indispensability of the Indian public Service will always command admiring testimony. If that Service is to be regarded as in course of supersession none the less it is at least essential to the successful conduct of any transition that its high qualities should be recognised, appreciated and realised to the full

by all those who are engaged in the problems of effecting that transition.

I have done my best, and I am afraid I have wearied your Lordships in doing so, to put before you the views of His Majesty's Government on the Indian situation, their policy and also the feelings of the Party I represent outside Parliament in regard to the aims of the Indian Swarajists. His Majesty's Government are convinced that the proper line towards Home Rule in India is in friendly co-operation. His Majesty's Government have been impressed by the difficulties in the atmosphere of the Indian politics. The first is the intense and, as they are convinced, the grievously mistaken mistrust and the determination of uncompromising intransigence indicated in the election manifesto of the Sawarj Party last autumn, and also the dissatisfaction expressed by more moderate advocates of self-government. Secondly, and more recently, an appreciable modification of that hostile and intransigent attitude has been indicated not only in the recent proceedings in the Legislative Assembly but in many communications and expressions of opinion which have reached His Majesty's Government, both through official and unofficial channels, from persons representing weighty and influential opinion who are anxious that by some manner of conference a way forward may be found out of the present difficulties.

His Majesty's Government having themselves the same ultimate aim as the India Sawarj Party, namely, the substitution of responsible Indian Dominion government for the present admittedly transitional political Constitution, are earnestly desirous of availing themselves in whatever may be found the best possible method of this manifest disposition towards effectual consultation. Various modes of making this approach have been unofficially suggested. The Legislative Assembly have proposed a round table conference. The Indian National Conference is proposing to send a deputation over, and representatives of Indian interests in this country have suggested a mission to India. His Majesty's Government, while they are open to consider any practical proposals, are not yet satisfied as to what may be the best means for establishing that closer contact and better understanding

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that is so manifestly desirable. Some means of arriving at that closer contact must, they are convinced, be sought, and they hope, after due consultation with the Government of India, to be able with the least avoidable delay to decide upon the means they will desire to adopt.

In the meantime His Majesty's Government is unequivocally friendly towards the Indian Constitutional Reform Party, appeals to that Party for patience and circumspection, and for co-operation in using the Councils for their essential purpose of efficient administration according to the views of members on any particular question, and not as a field for administrative sabotage and political exacerbation. His Majesty's Government, during the short period since it took office, has been continually pressed for attention to urgent matters, and it has been impossible for it to explore all the factors of difficulty in the present Indian political atmosphere. It is only a week since the critical debate in the Legislative Assembly took place. The investigation of the situation which the Government of India has already promised to make cannot fail to assist that Government to furnish His Majesty's Government with further considered advice upon the problems involved and as to the best possible lines of approach to any further developments.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, we shall all of us, I am sure, sympathise with the physical disability under which the noble Lord told us at the commencement of his remarks that he was labouring, but with which, I am bound to say, he appeared to me to cope with increasing success as he proceeded. His speech covered a very wide field indeed, over which it will clearly be impossible for me, in the space of time at my disposal, to follow him. Indeed, I was not always quite sure whether the noble Lord was giving us personal and sometimes autobiographical incidents of his own career and his own opinions, or whether he was quoting the considered view of His Majesty's Government.

LORD OLIVIER: I think in every case in which I quoted a personal view, I quoted it as one with which I was assured that His Majesty's Government were in sympathy.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Then I shall treat the noble Lord's speech as carrying with it not only his own great personal authority, but that of His Majesty's Government at every stage. In the ordinary course of events I should not be standing at this box to comment upon the speech of the noble Lord. That duty would naturally appertain to the late Secretary of State for India, Viscount Peel, but in his temporary absence from the country the duty devolves upon me. It is only with very considerable diffidence that at any time now I speak upon Indian affairs, and for this reason, that it is now rather more than a quarter of a century ago that I went out to India to assume the government of that country, and in the space of time that has since elapsed things have moved so rapidly, the perspective has changed so completely, that I am never certain that I am not out of touch and out of focus.

Nevertheless I feel it my duty, as I am sure do all of your Lordships, to follow as closely as I can the progress of events in India, still regarding, as I have always regarded, the duty of the Government of India as the most momentous, the most important, the most responsible that is laid upon the shoulders of Englishmen. In your Lordships' House I feel that every one of us, in a sense, recognises a similar responsibility, because if there was in our legislative system here any body that made itself more particularly responsible for the constitutional experiment that is now being conducted in India it was, in its later stages at any rate, your Lordships' House. It was by a Committee composed of members of both Houses of Parliament and presided over by Lord Selborne that the Government of India Act, 1919, was moulded into its final shape. Since then its progress has been watched and sometimes advised upon by a Committee upon which your Lordships are represented, and there is the further fact that on these benches are seated, as we all know, men of the highest experience and authority, who in their time have borne a responsible part in the Government of India. Never let it be said, therefore, that in any question affecting India the House of Lords is not vitally interested; never let us for one moment abdicate our claim to have a voice in the progressive solution of its affairs.

The noble Lord devoted the greater part of his remarks to dealing with the present political position in India, and I will come to that question in a moment, and will endeavour to present it to your Lordships in the light in which it appears to me and, I venture to think, to the great majority of your Lordships' House. But before I do so, let me allude in passing—and it shall be a brief reference only—to two subjects which the noble Lord touched upon in the concluding stages of his speech. In the last five or ten minutes of his speech he spoke about the unrest and disorders that had occurred in the Punjab, where a section of the Sikh community have apparently come into violent collision with the forces of Government. This is a most deplorable event. The Sikhs have been known to all of us who have any familiarity with India as not only the most valiant and courageous warriors in that great country, but as being among the most loyal subjects and adherents of the British Crown, and it is indeed evident there must have been regrettable mismanagement somewhere to have brought about a state of affairs in which you have bodies of Sikh fanatics marching about the country and having to be shot down because they are resisting the legitimate decrees of Government. I apportion no blame to anybody, because I am not sufficiently familiar with the facts.

I think that the Government of India were perfectly right in enforcing the abdication of the Maharajah of Nabha. His father, who was a great personal friend of mine, was one of the noblest and the most patriotic of the Indian Princes. The son was quite unlike the father. He was unfitted by character, education and inclination to be the ruler of a State, and I think it was a fortunate moment when his services in that capacity were dispensed with. But there must have been something wrong in a state of affairs which allows a movement correctly described by the noble Lord as religious and Puritan in its origin, a movement for the reform of religion, to develop into a political agitation associated with dacoity, accompanied by violence and wrapped up in crime. The Government of India must really take this in hand and put it right. I am very glad to see that Sir Malcolm Hailey, an official who was more than once quoted

by the noble Lord, has been appointed Governor of the Punjab. He is a strong and fearless man, and I trust that under his administration an end may be put to these troubles, and that we may get the Sikhs back on to the old platform of loyal co-operation with His Majesty's Government.

The next point, to which I desire to allude only for a few moments in passing, is that of the release of Mr. Gandhi. The noble Lord said that he and his colleagues, as I understood, regarded it as a terrible thing that a man of the saintly character of Mr. Gandhi should be imprisoned. That is a much more serious thing than a man of his saintly character should do things which deserve imprisonment. What is the case about Mr. Gandhi? I have not one word to say against his character: I believe it to be beyond reproach. I have nothing to say against his ideals, which I believe to have been as visionary as they were sincere. But I have a good deal to say about his conduct, and it is notorious that this Mr. Gandhi has been for the last four or five years the convinced and inveterate enemy of the British Government, out to destroy our system, preaching a doctrine and giving advice which have been connected with indiscriminate and terrible bloodshed in many parts of the country.

What eventually happens? He makes a speech, or he writes articles in newspapers, preaching the doctrine of open sedition, he is arrested, and he is tried. He glories in his act; he does not deny for one moment that he has done it; he pleads guilty, and when he is sentenced he recognises the perfect justice and propriety of his sentence. He is sent to prison for a term of six years. This was in March, 1922. Before two years have elapsed—they will be over next month—he is released, and the noble Lord seems to me rather to rub his hands over this release. What are the circumstances of the case? After Mr. Gandhi was imprisoned he developed appendicitis, for which he had to undergo an operation and, in common with many of us who have gone through the same experience, the doctor recommended that his convalescence required that he should go to a seaside place, and accordingly he was taken there to complete his recovery. I am all in favour of Mr. Gandhi completing his recovery in suitable surround-

ings, and of allowing him every convenience and comfort that may facilitate his recovery, and under the Indian Penal Code nothing is simpler than to take such steps and then to bring him back to complete his sentence. But you did not do anything of the kind, and when I say "You" I am speaking with some doubt as to what occurred, because I do not know, even now, whether the release was the work of the Bombay Government, or of the Government of India, or of the Government at home. I suspect that the two latter had nothing to do with it at all.

However that may be, he is unconditionally released, after only two years of his sentence had expired, and I am told that since release he has already expressed his intention of prosecuting his previous creed, that he hopes it may not be necessary again to preach civil disobedience, but that he has not abated his attitude. Therefore, possibly, we shall presently find ourselves faced with a recrudescence of the old agitation, and the Government will have tied their hands, because they cannot, having released Mr. Gandhi unconditionally, put him back. There may be another result. If you let out Mr. Gandhi on medical grounds, how are you to refuse on similar grounds the release of all the other political prisoners, of whom there are many, shut up in India at the present time, and in whose interest I venture to say it would not be very difficult to procure a medical certificate? That is all I want to say about Mr. Gandhi, and it amounts to this, that his unconditional release, in the circumstances which I have described, appears to me to demand some further explanation, and some better defence, than up till now has been offered for it.

Then I turn to what is, after all, the main subject which has brought us here to-night. We are here to examine into the position of the Government of India, as determined by legislation passed through the two Houses of Parliament not five years ago—to discover what progress is being made with the Constitution then set up, what grounds there are, if any, for modifying it, and what is the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards any such attempt. That, I take it, is the subject which we are here to discuss this evening. The noble Lord read to your Lordships, and very properly, the terms of the original declaration of

August 20, 1917, framed and issued by the Government of which at that time I was a member. That declaration I need not now repeat. At a later stage, after the Bill had passed through the Joint Committee under Lord Selborne, of which I have spoken, it assumed its final form, and in its Preamble it laid down the conditions which have governed our action ever since.

Let me read the words to your Lordships:—

"Whereas it is the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian Administration, and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire:

"And whereas progress in giving effect to this policy can only be achieved by successive stages, and it is expedient that substantial steps in this direction should now be taken:

"And whereas the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples:

"And whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility:

"Be it therefore enacted, etc."

I might, but I have not time, quote passages from the speeches of Liberal Members of Parliament, and of Liberal Secretaries of State, from Mr. Montagu himself, repeating, as recently as 1922, the propositions laid down in the Preamble of this Act.

A little later in the Act you find it specifically provided that only after the lapse of ten years—that is to say, in 1929—is there to be constituted the first Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry in order to report to the Government.

LORD OLIVIER: Might I make one observation? It has been stated by a Secretary of State for India—not myself—that he interpreted that as not forbidding an earlier Inquiry.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I will read it. Clause 41 says:

"(1) At the expiration of ten years after the passing of this Act—"

it does not suggest an earlier period—

"the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament, shall submit for the approval of His Majesty the names of persons to act as a commission for the purposes of this section.

"(2) The persons whose names are so submitted, if approved by His Majesty, shall be a commission for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the system of government, the growth of education, and the development of representative institutions, in British India, and matters connected therewith, and the commission shall report as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify, or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of second chambers of the local legislatures is or is not desirable."

What is the result of these passages which I have ventured to read to your Lordships? Do they not establish these propositions—that in the view of the Government at that time, endorsed by every succeeding Government, and accepted by both Houses of Parliament, responsible self-government is the goal to which hereafter Great Britain looks forward in respect of her great Indian Dependency, but secondly, that it is only by slow stages that this ultimate goal can be reached, and that the speed with which the advance is capable of being made must be regulated by the proven capacity of the people to deserve the increasing confidence which it may be possible to repose in them. Surely the first test of such increasing capacity is willingness to support the Government in the elementary duty of preserving law and order. Then, thirdly, it is laid down in these passages to which I am referring that the responsibility for determining the stages of advance rests, not with the Government of India, not with the Secretary of State for India, but with the Houses of Parliament, and that only if Parliament is satisfied can this advance be made.

I drew attention to this, because I think there is too great a tendency in India to think that the pace of Parliament can be forced. The hands of Government can be forced, but it is a much more difficult thing to force the hands of Parliament, and I do not believe that this House, or either House, of Parliament will be in the least disposed to surrender or qualify the vast responsibility thus placed in its

hands. Lastly, as the passage which I last read sufficiently proves, it was laid down that after the lapse of ten years the first Commission of Inquiry should be set up. Let me say this. To those decisions and to those principles the Government at home, the Government of India, every Governor in India and, I believe, every civil servant in India have been unswervingly loyal. I cannot say too much for the fidelity and unselfish devotion with which even those who disagreed with those reforms, who disliked parts of them, have nevertheless bent their shoulders to carry them through. Nobody knows that better than my noble friend Lord Chelmsford, who will endorse every word I am saying in this respect. There were some of us in this country—I was one—who exceedingly disliked some of the provisions of this Act. I abominated the system of dyarchy, but when the Committee of your Lordships' House decided to recommend it because they said they could not find another alternative, I bowed my head and acquiesced. And certainly I have never said one word since, and I never will, to retard the peaceful and successful evolution of Indian constitutional life, as provided for by the Act of 1919.

Now I come to what has happened in India, and I hope the noble Lord will pardon me for saying that he gave a very inadequate account indeed of the reception which, from the earliest days, this great gift, generous and liberal to a degree, met with from the native politicians in India itself. Let me tell your Lordships what occurred. The Bill was passed into law in 1919. The National Congress of India, which was supposed to represent the views of the most intelligent native politicians, repudiated these concessions at once, and started an agitation for the grant of complete responsible government. Early in 1920, the year after the Bill had passed through Parliament, came that sinister combination of Mr. Gandhi with the two Mohamedan brothers Mohamed and Shaukat Ali, with which, I think, my noble friend had to deal. Then the policy of non-co-operation was started, and in September, 1920, the Congress invited all its supporters to boycott the elections, to boycott education, to boycott the law courts, to boycott foreign goods, to boycott the Imperial Services all round.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.

The next stage was in November, 1921, when the Congress openly converted itself into a revolutionary organisation, teaching the doctrine of civil disobedience and the non-payment of taxes, and aimed eventually at the complete overthrow of British Government in India, and the complete emancipation of India not merely from British, but from all Western influence and education. The next stage to which I draw attention was the *hartal*, or suspension of all public business, that was decreed by this public body on the arrival of the Prince of Wales in India in November, 1921, with the disastrous consequences that ensued. Thus, this very brief summary will show you—and I could multiply my evidence a hundred-fold—that the Congress Party in India has now developed itself into a purely revolutionary party, with the intention of breaking down the system of Government in India, of severing the connection between this country and India, and, in fact, of bringing all government to a standstill.

Now I pass from the action of Congress, which you may say is irresponsible, and therefore, if not negligible, at any rate not of capital importance, to what has been done in the Imperial Legislative Assembly, to which the noble Lord devoted a good deal of his remarks. The first Elections took place, if I remember rightly, in 1920. The Assembly was opened at Delhi by the Duke of Connaught in February, 1921. In September they proposed a Resolution completely forgetting everything that I described to you as the conditions under which this great constitutional development had occurred—a Resolution urging that complete responsible government should be set up in all the Provinces in 1924, and in all Departments of the Government of India by the same time, except in the Army, foreign affairs, and the Political Department, and that complete Dominion home rule should be conceded in 1929. In other words, here was this body, which had only been called into existence in February, 1921, proclaiming in September, 1921, that it had already acquired sufficient experience to justify its being made the recipient of the complete and final boon. The same sort of resolution has been passed since, and the noble Lord alluded to one of them which was passed only the other day at Delhi, to which I will come in a moment. As to that resolution, I was

rather amused to read in the speech of one of the Indian gentlemen, who proposed the immediate assumption by the Indians of all the Departments of Government, that he said that, although it was necessary that they should have complete control of the Army in India, still it was desirable that the British officers and soldiers should be invited to stay on—in order, of course, to save these gentlemen from the immediate annihilation to which they would otherwise have been exposed.

I have tried to put before your Lordships what has been the attitude of the National Congress in India, and what has been the attitude of the Imperial Legislative Council set up under the scheme of reform. Now I come to a part of the noble Lord's speech to which he devoted very great and prolonged attention. He was seeking to explain—and he did it in a very sympathetic way—what was the foundation of the feeling of unrest ("soreness," I think, was the word that he used) that exists in India, and that has brought about this lamentable state of affairs; and he gave a number of illustrations, to which, of course, I can do no more than allude in a sentence or two. The first of these was the Dyer debate in your Lordships' House some years ago, and the Resolution that was passed by your Lordships upon that occasion. That Resolution, I thought myself, was a great blunder. I argued against it, I appealed against it, with all the force at my disposal. I am convinced that I was right, and I am convinced that your Lordships were wrong. I told you then that that decision arrived at by you on that night, under the spur of feelings which we all understand, and with which some of us sympathise, would have a terrible effect in India. And it had. And among the causes named by the noble Lord this afternoon I am bound to confess that I think he was not unjustified in referring to that.

But I cannot say the same for the other reason. He alluded to a speech made by Mr. Lloyd George, in which Mr. Lloyd George spoke about the Civil Service as the steel frame of our system in India. Well, I do not, of course, agree with all that that eminent statesman says, but I am bound to say that seems to me to have been a most sensible and a most sound remark. That is exactly what it is, and, if you destroy your Civil

Service, as you are in process of doing, it is no good to talk about the British Raj in India—the British Raj in India will fade away and disappear unless you have a sound Civil Service to support it. And what is the *gravamen* of the charge? The noble Lord says that, apart from the phrase about the steel framework, Mr. Lloyd George's remarks gave rise to serious misapprehension because he said that the Indian Civil Service must remain intact, and that thereby he gave them to understand that the promises about Indianisation were worthless and were not intended to be carried out. Dear me! Is not this quibbling about words? Does not everybody know, when you talk about preserving the Civil Service in India intact, that you are not speaking of the actual numbers; you are speaking about the spirit, the *esprit de corps*, the traditions, the magnificent sense of duty; and to take a thing of that sort and make it a cause for complaint is going absolutely too far.

Then the noble Lord says that another cause of soreness is that Indians are persuaded that we are not proceeding sufficiently rapidly with Indianisation, and that our promises have not been carried out. Does he not know the facts? I can tell him. The facts are these. The noble Viscount, Lord Chelmsford, who is sitting opposite, was the author of the proposal that as regards Indianisation we should advance to a point in reference to the Indian Civil Service at which 33½ per cent. of the Indian Civil Servants should be Indians and, although conditions are not laid down as regards other Departments of Government, it was assumed that somewhat the same rate of progress and somewhere about that scale would be adopted.

VISCOUNT CHELMSFORD: Of recruitment.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Yes. Do your Lordships know what is going on in many of the Services of India now, not five years but only four and a half years after the passing of that legislation by this House? A great many of your Services have been Indianised to over 50 per cent. Why have they been Indianised? Because the men will not stay. The noble Lord talks of recruitment, and there he is right. That

is just what is actually happening. You cannot recruit because men will not go out. Go to my own University of Oxford and to the University of Cambridge, for which my noble friend who is sitting by me is responsible, and find out whether the young men of the day, the pith and core of the British people, whom you have hitherto relied upon to represent you in India, are going to India. They are doing nothing of the sort. Where fifty went when I was an undergraduate at Oxford, not two go now. That is what is happening, and that is the result of this policy. Men are disgusted. They cannot stand it; and the idea that, when this process of Indianisation is proceeding at this headlong, this catastrophic speed, the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India should come here and quote this and say that we are not carrying out our promises about Indianisation, is too much.

Then another cause of soreness was the reimposition of the Salt Tax. Here is a thing that I do know something about. When I was Viceroy, owing to the happy and prosperous times in which I administered the country, we were able to reduce the Salt Tax to the lowest point at which it had ever stood. But it was always understood that if the finances of India became bad, and money was required, it would be necessary to reimpose a portion of the taxation which I took off. That situation occurred last year. Lord Reading had to balance his Budget. He had no alternative but to do it, and, using the powers conferred upon him by the Act, he certified—I think that is the phrase—the reimposition of this particular tax. And the noble Lord invites us, with a sympathetic groan, to regard the sufferings of the poor people of India who have had to pay more for their salt than they had to pay before. I wish he would go to the India Office and find out whether any complaint has reached that office from the Government of India as to the suffering caused by this increased taxation. He tried to bring that up as a charge against the late Government, and I desire—

LORD OLIVIER: I gave the noble Marquess what had been told me on very great authority, including the authority of Lord Reading—that complaints had been made.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Yes, and I am concerned in informing their Lordships how utterly without foundation those complaints are. Then the next cause of complaint was Kenya, and the noble Lord devoted something like twenty or twenty-five minutes of his speech to arguments about that question. If I may say so, they would have been, perhaps, a little more appropriate to a debate upon Kenya itself; but let that pass. What did we do about Kenya? The noble Duke who was responsible for the Colonial Office, and who is not here to-night, proposed, and His Majesty's late Government agreed to, a settlement, a compromise about the Kenya question which was based upon the very principle and ground for which the noble Lord was pleading during the greater portion of his remarks—namely, justice to the natives. Who are the natives, and of what part of the world? They are the natives of Africa. That was the whole basis of our solution. It did not carry satisfaction in India, because I am afraid that nothing would carry satisfaction in India save a complete settlement of their demands. But only the other day at the Imperial Conference it was proposed and accepted by the Government that the Committees to which the noble Lord referred should be sent out to Kenya and other places to deal with the matter, and I hope that satisfaction will be the outcome of their labours. I will devote no more time to it now, because it is really irrelevant to the discussion, but I hope the noble Lord will give us an opportunity another time of discussing the question at greater length.

Let me here add one word. The idea, I see, is prevalent that a change may now be required because the reforms are believed to have broken down. I have already spoken of the devoted labours of the Civil Service in attempting to carry them out, and substantial progress has been made. I remember, in particular, only a year ago, being told, on the authority of the Government of India, the Viceroy of India, that very satisfactory progress was being made in the conduct of the proceedings of the new Legislative Councils; and where they have broken down at all it has been due simply to the attitude and the policy of the extremists who will not work with

any system good or bad, and who have been bent on reducing the Government to impotence.

Now I come to what I think is the last, but the most important, subject with which I shall have to deal. I come to the proceedings that have just occurred in the Imperial Legislative Assembly at Delhi and to the pronouncement that has been made upon them by the noble Lord. I followed the debate at Delhi, so far as I could, in the condensed telegrams in the British newspapers, although I had not the advantage, of course, of the fuller information which the noble Lord placed before us this evening. In the course of that debate quite a number of proposals were placed before the Assembly by different Indian Members, and they culminated in the Amendment, which was finally carried by a large majority—seventy-six to forty-eight—for a round-table conference to draw up a Constitution for India.

I might take the point that it does not seem to me to be any part of the function of the Legislative Assembly, as constituted under the Act, to pass academic resolutions of this description. They deal with reserved subjects which are excluded from their notice; but let that pass. Let us look at the thing upon its merits. The noble Lord read to us—at least, I think he did—passages from the two speeches which were made at the beginning and at the end of the debate by the Home Member, Sir Malcolm Hailey, who is shortly going, I believe, to the Punjab. As I gather, what Sir Malcolm Hailey promised on behalf of the Government was this, that there should be a serious investigation, in consultation with representative Indian opinion, into all blemishes or defects in the working of the present transitional Constitution, and that if such investigation should demonstrate the possibility or the feasibility of an advance within the Act by the use of the rule-making power to which the noble Lord referred, the Government would make recommendations in that sense, to be placed before the Imperial Legislative Assembly, before the Secretary of State, and before Parliament.

That was—I think I have given it quite correctly—the reply of the representative of the Government of India; and we have heard to-day with interest—

because it is very important—that this reply was given by him not only with the authority of the Government of India and the Viceroy, but with the authority and knowledge of His Majesty's Government and the Secretary of State at home. Therefore, that statement to which I have just referred represents the considered view of the present administration, unless it has been modified since. Sir Malcolm Hailey added—I noted this remark by the noble Lord—that the British people and Parliament would not lightly reconsider the Constitution of 1919.

Then the noble Lord, in the latter part of his speech, read to your Lordships a number of pronouncements which, on the one occasion that I ventured to interrupt him, he told me represented the considered views of the Cabinet of which he is a member. I listened to those expressions of opinion. They were couched in cautious and carefully chosen, but I thought at moments in rather ambiguous, terms. The noble Lord spoke about the desirability of establishing closer contact between the Home Rule Party in India and His Majesty's Government. That may be all right. It is always desirable to have close contact between governors and governed, but close contact may mean that one swallows the other. That would constitute a very great danger. Then the noble Lord spoke about lines of advance towards responsible Government. Are the lines of advance to be within the ambit of the Constitution which we passed in 1919, or are they to be outside it?

The noble Lord pleaded—and I think pleaded with perfect reason—for time. He said: "His Majesty's Government have only been in Office for a few weeks. It is a very momentous affair. They must be allowed a little time." I think the Under-Secretary of State said "three weeks" in the House of Commons. They must be allowed to come before Parliament again and tell us the suggestions that they have to make. That, I think, is not at all unreasonable. I hope I am right in having gathered from two remarks which were made by the noble Lord—and this is important—that His Majesty's Government feel no sympathy with the proposal of a round-table conference, which was part of the Resolution that was carried by the majority of the Legislative Council in India. I say so

for this reason. I cannot imagine a more unfortunate, or what would be likely in the long run to be a more disastrous, method of endeavouring to cope with the situation in India than resort to what is called a "round-table conference." I do not know that our experience in this country of those conferences has been particularly favourable or encouraging, but in India your round-table conference would have to contain representatives of all classes of a population of 320,000,000—the politicians, the princes, the agriculturists, the merchants, the British community, the Indian community, the Sikhs, the Mahommedans, the 60,000,000 wretched outcastes, of whom the noble Lord spoke. Can you imagine anything more absurd than to have an assembly composed of those various constituents to draw up a new Constitution for India? The idea of the plan has only to be stated to be covered with ridicule.

And I am equally sceptical about a Royal Commission. You do not want any more Royal Commissions for India. You have one sitting there now. You have a Royal Commission under Lord Lee of Fareham investigating the difficulties of the Service—a most anxious and difficult question—which has not yet reported, and to send out another Royal Commission, apparently composed of persons from this country, in order to investigate how far you can go back upon your decisions arrived at in 1919 would, I think, be an encouragement and a sop to extremist agitation in India, and would do your cause not only no good but great harm.

What ought you to do? If I might venture, as an old head of the Government of India, to add a word in these circumstances, I would say: You want to find out what are the real facts of the case, and you want advice from responsible quarters. We, in this country, are incapable of giving it, because every year that passes takes us further and further afield from our own experience. Go, then, to the men who are working the scheme in India. Go to your Governors and to your provincial Governors, and to their Councils. Go to the Viceroy, and say to him: "From your experience can you tell us how these reforms are going on?" It is all the easier to do that, because I remember being told a little while ago that only in the summer of last year the Viceroy himself issued a *questionnaire*, containing a

large number of specific questions, to the various Provincial Governments and Governors, asking them to report to him upon the way in which reforms were being carried out, and to give him any information which they might desire on the subject. You have your material, and instead of constituting round-table conferences or Royal Commissions, with the trail of doubt and danger which would follow them, go to the people who really know, and come with those opinions when you want to give us the latest state of information about what is happening in India itself.

The Government left us in a position of some doubt this afternoon. I am anxious to interpret the remarks of the noble Lord in the most favourable sense, and I hope I have not done any injustice to the substance of his argument in the observations I have made; but may I, in sitting down, summarise in a sentence or two what I humbly conceive to be the propositions which ought to regulate the conduct of Parliament in dealing with this question in the near future? The first would be this: That this country and this Parliament does not recede from the offer—the liberal and generous offer—which it made to India in 1919, and which it still intends faithfully to carry out. Secondly, there is no reason whatever for pulling up the roots of this new system before they are firmly fixed in the ground. By all means remedy the defects to which the noble Lord was alluding just now, but do not tear up the plant itself.

Thirdly, the idea that India is at this stage of her evolution ripe for self-government is an idea that cannot be entertained by any thinking man either in this country or in India itself, and if that idea were prosecuted, if an attempt were made to hurry the pace and to give something like self-government to India at this stage, believe me—and I speak here from knowledge—that not only would any such step be ruinous and disastrous to your government in India, but it would be fatal to India itself. It would plunge India back into the misrule and anarchy from which one hundred and fifty or more years ago we rescued it, and, above all, the section of the Indian people who would suffer most would be the great toiling masses, the millions, the hundreds of millions, for whom the agitators care very little but who find almost their sole

protection and salvation in the existence of the British Government in India.

Our object should be to proceed cautiously and steadfastly on the lines we have laid down, and which give, in my judgment, great and ample scope for all legitimate development on the part of the advanced sections of the Indian people. We ought not to yield to violence or obstruction in any form; still more ought we to encourage and support the moderate party in India. The Moderate Party are being swept off their legs because they are not quite certain whether the Government is going to stand by them, not quite certain whether the Labour Government here is going to give India something much bigger than you have hitherto done. Stabilise your Moderate Party, stand by them and see them through, and you will do a better day's service for India than by any new proposals you may make here.

There was one remark of the noble Lord with which I entirely concur. He said: "How is this problem to be solved? It can be solved only by mutual understanding and mutual co-operation." That is perfectly true. None of us want to fight any section or any part of the Indian people. We must get the best of the Indian people to understand us and sympathise with us. Get them to co-operate with you and your policy will succeed. If that is the policy of His Majesty's Government—I hope I am right in my interpretation—then they will receive nothing but support from us. Should they attempt anything more advanced or revolutionary I can only tell them that I think they will receive our steadfast and resolute opposition. I do not believe that they will attempt it for one moment, but in sitting down may I call their attention respectfully to one condition in their Parliamentary existence which must govern what they do. I do not want to say anything unpleasant or invidious, but His Majesty's Government know perfectly well that they only represent a minority in Parliament, not only in this House but in the other House as well, and it must be perfectly obvious that it does not lie within their power, it is altogether outside their capacity, to propose any sudden violent or drastic changes in this matter. If they contemplate such, do let them remember that they are bound

by the whole history of this question to take Parliament into consultation. It is Parliament that governs India, not any individual who sits on that Bench or at Delhi, and while Parliament will strain every effort to carry the scheme that is in existence to success, Parliament, I am sure, will resist to the uttermost any attempt that would have no other result than to break it down.

LORD MESTON: My Lords, I move that the debate be now adjourned until Thursday, February 28.

LORD PARMOOR: Thursday, the 28th, is a convenient date, as the Motion now standing in the name of Lord Muskerry will not be taken.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: There is a debate on the Lausanne Treaty on that day.

LORD PARMOOR: Yes, that is so, I was looking at the wrong date.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Why not take it to-morrow?

LORD PARMOOR: There are three Questions down for to-morrow, but perhaps it would be convenient if we adjourned the debate until to-morrow.

Moved accordingly, and, on Question, Motion agreed to: Debate adjourned till to-morrow accordingly.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

LORD CLWYD: My Lords, I understand that it will be convenient to the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India if I postpone until Thursday next, my Question as to whether it is the intention of the Government to submit a Motion to both Houses of Parliament this Session for the appointment of the Standing Joint Committee on Indian affairs. I will therefore put it down for that day.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:

Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. [H.L.]

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 27th February, 1924.

INDIA.

Debate resumed (according to Order) on the statement of the Secretary of State for India, yesterday, with regard to affairs in India.

LORD MESTON: My Lords, I rise to continue the discussion which began last night on the situation in India. That situation is just about as puzzling and difficult as any that has arisen within living memory. It is by no means unnatural that at such a crisis there should be widely divergent views held by those who are seeking for a remedy. Two opinions, entirely opposite in character, seem to be most frequently and most persistently pressed on those who are interested in India's problems. One view is that held by what I may call the believers in the strong right arm of the British Government "Rule India," say the adherents of this theory, "with a firm hand. Think a good deal less about self-government and a good deal more about good government. Revert to some of our old paternal methods, and the troubles of to-day will very soon evaporate." Then, at the other extreme of political thought, there is the opposite theory, the theory of what I may call abdication. "India," say the adherents of this view, "has no more need for us. Our work in India is finished, whether we like it or not, and we had better recognise the fact as soon as possible. Let us, therefore, give India what she wants with as good a grace as possible and clear out of the country as quickly as we can, lest some worse thing befall us."

I do not think any of us suspected the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India of being a subscriber to the former doctrine; but possibly some of us had apprehensions that he might have leanings towards the latter. After the statement we heard from him last night, I do not know that those apprehensions are wholly removed, but they are certainly allayed to a very comfortable degree. There is very much in his speech with which it was possible to be in entire accord. One could not help appreciating the great and genuine sympathy which he manifested for Indian life and Indian

aspirations. At the same time there were certain omissions from his statement. There were certain points which will probably be regarded as ambiguous when they reach India. The tone, if I may venture to say so without disrespect, was just a little impersonal and perhaps a little abstract, and it is possibly not quite easy for the noble Lord to realise with what anxiety his pronouncement is awaited in India by several classes: by those impatient reformers who are anxiously waiting for some sign of vacillation here; by those others who, perfectly loyal to the Constitution, are equally eagerly waiting for a clear lead from the Government with which they would fain ally themselves; and by those hard-pressed servants of the Crown who, in circumstances of very exceptional difficulty, have been striving to carry on the King's Government.

If I may, I would venture very briefly to restate the main features and the main needs of the situation as they appear to some of us who believe neither in the doctrine of the strong right arm, nor in that of abdication, but were associated from a very early stage with the reforms which are now in progress and who wish anything than to see them shipwrecked now. The position briefly is that we have in India a bitter uncompromising hostility on the part of a section of the community who call themselves Swarajists or Home Rulers. As the noble Lord mentioned last night, those Swarajists, during the first three years of the new Constitution—that is, from the time when His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught initiated the new Councils up to the second General Election at the end of 1923—held themselves entirely aloof from the Legislatures. But what he did not mention was that, in addition to that, they went up and down the country busy-ing themselves in stirring up amongst the masses of the people a sense of disaffection, discontent with our rule and bitter racial animosity. The masses of the simple people, who in their dull, grey lives are never averse from new excitement, were appreciably affected—more so it is true in some Provinces than in others, but still, on the whole, to a degree which was certainly neither expected nor hoped for. Many of the moderate men who would much rather be friends of the Government than opponents, were brow-beaten and driven and scared by the

vehemence of the methods and the vituperation of the extremists into something like passive acceptance of the movement, and in some cases even into nominal adherence to it.

Turning to our own officials, harassed and overworked, isolated figures among the millions who surround them, it was quite impossible for them to carry on any effective counter-propaganda, or indeed any propaganda at all, so that this wave of agitation swept almost unchecked over the land. The form which it took at first was non-co-operation, refusal to take part in, or to associate themselves in any way with, the work of government, refusal to hold office, refusal to send their children to State schools, refusal to have anything to do with the officials of the country, whether British or Indian. As your Lordships know, that policy signally collapsed, and the Swarajists have now gone into the Legislatures, as we are told, in some cases in very large numbers, and in all cases with the deliberate intention of obstructing and defeating the Government and wrecking the new Constitution from inside. It is extremely significant that they were offered responsibility in at least two Provinces, and that they refused it. They mean to break up the whole work of the British Government in India, and the form which their demand takes at the moment is that of the immediate liberation of India from British rule.

This, in a few sentences, is the position with which we are faced to-day, and it is clearly not a position in which any statesman can talk light-heartedly about making concessions. In the first place, I am sure your Lordships will recognise that in this situation there is nothing that is new, or that is unforeseen. You have only to carry back your minds to those few weeks in the winter of 1919 when you were engaged in passing an Act—certainly with obvious reluctance in certain quarters on the part of noble Lords who were familiar with India—which gave effect to a decision of the Government then in power, a Government which never fell short of any of its predecessors in Liberal measures—to give India the first instalment of democratic government. At that time the existence of this fierce opposition was perfectly well known. I remember, years before, a prominent leader of the Party, who only last week was one of the

most remarkable speakers in the debate at Delhi, touring the villages in Bengal, and preaching his propaganda. Even then, fifteen years ago, when he took his station in the village market place and talked to the villagers, he raised above himself a flag of his own, and on that flag was inscribed the single word "Expulsion."

To come to more modern times, the scheme which was drafted by the noble Viscount who is now First Lord of the Admiralty and Mr. Montagu had already been rejected by the National Congress and the Moslem League before the Act of 1919 came before this House. Although the full vigour and venom of the extremist movement which has subsequently developed may at that time have been underestimated, still the existence of the movement and the definite purpose of the aims to which it worked were clearly before your Lordships and before the public in 1919. Provisions for meeting that movement, and for countering it, were deliberately inserted in the Act. They were inserted as the result of long and careful study by a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament on which, I may mention, the Party to which the Government now in power belongs was represented. The Committee sat on that Bill all through the preceding summer under the chairmanship of Lord Selborne. I will only recall to your Lordships' memory the fact that in the Report of that Committee, not once but repeatedly, occurs with emphasis the statement that measures for dealing with destructive opposition—measures, for example, such as that for certifying taxation which the Viceroy considered necessary—were to be recognised not as exceptional weapons to be used with great reluctance, but as part of the regular and constituted machinery of the Constitution. Why then should there be any hesitation in using those measures, and handling those weapons, now?

But if there is nothing new or unforeseen in the Swarajya movement in its developments, there is also certainly nothing new in the fact that certain other sections of Indian politicians who, while they do not go so far as the extremists, and even ostensibly range themselves under the banner of the moderates, are yet dissatisfied. They do not go so far as to demand immediate liberation of the whole of India, but even

a large section of what are known as the Moderate Party, or Liberal Party, have been recently asking for the immediate liberation at least of the Provinces. In other words, they secure one stage of political advance and they immediately ask for another. This action is exactly what might have been prophesied, and I am not sure that it was not prophesied before the Select Committee. It is, indeed, if I am not speaking offensively, consonant with Oriental tradition. The generous giver of the Eastern fable is never one who gives with any discrimination. The Eastern prince who meets the wanderer who happens to secure his favour, not only empties his purse into his hands, but hands him over his horse, and his robe, and his sandals, and the ring from off his finger.

And that is what the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India will be expected to do by those friends of ours if he responds to the demands that are now being pressed upon him. If the Government yields to this cry for Provincial autonomy to-day, I think we may venture to prophesy that twelve months will not pass before an outcry equally loud, equally persistent, equally convincing or unconvincing, will be made for Imperial autonomy as well. Is it possible for us to contemplate concessions which carry those effects with them? Is there any point at which, if we have once begun to depart from the course that was laid down in 1919, it will be possible for us to stop; any point at which the same forces which are at work now will allow us to stop? The Swarajists, as we were reminded last night, have just secured a victory in the Legislative Assembly. They have carried a Resolution calling for a round table conference in order to search for agreement on some radical alteration in the Constitution. It is never easy to refuse the specious appearance of reason which underlies a demand for a round table conference.

But what is such a conference? What could such a conference, if it were accepted, possibly effect? It would placate absolutely nobody; it would drive the remaining Moderates, in self-defence, to range themselves alongside their extremist brethren; it would weaken immensely the power of the Executive Government in securing and maintaining order; and the only thing, I think, one

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could with safety say it would achieve is that the Swarajists would enter that conference with the unswerving determination to leave it either with nothing less than their full demands, or in a position which would enable them to press for their full demands the moment that the conference was over. I think, therefore, we may congratulate ourselves and the Government on the decision that was announced last night, that no countenance would be given to the idea of a round table conference. The extremist movement has certainly exceeded in its virulence and intensity anything that was foreseen in 1919, but it certainly has not changed its character or the destructive objects which it set out to accomplish. Why then, at the bidding of a force which we foresaw and endeavoured to counter at the earliest stage of the new Constitution, should we scrap the policy on which Parliament determined four years ago?

Can any one say with justice that that policy has been a failure? We used to hear episodes like the Malabar riots quoted as proof of its failure, and a few days ago we heard a reference to that deplorable event in the Punjab, as also a proof of its failure. They may be proofs, and they are proofs, of the general unrest and unsettlement which is storming through India, and indeed through every part of the world, at the present time, but they are no more proofs of the failure of the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme than the dockers' strike is a proof of the failure of the Treaty of Versailles. On the contrary, surely the experiment, started in great difficulties and at a time of great financial pressure, has done remarkable work for good in capable hands. Where it has fallen into the hands of weaker men it has not done so well. In all human affairs you will find some people who are capable of mishandling any machinery, even if it is not so delicate and complex as the new Constitution of India. I do not think it can be said from either side of the controversy that there is sufficient evidence to persuade Parliament that the time has come to throw over the new Constitution which they decided upon less than five years ago. I use the words "throw over" intentionally, although they may seem a little extreme, because in the same way as you can

scuttle a ship by pulling out a few of the important rivets, so you will certainly scrap the new Constitution by adopting some of the amendments which are canvassed in India and in this country also.

So far, I have been trying to explain that there is nothing new or unforeseen in the difficulties that face us to-day. That leads me to the second and the only other question with which I shall trouble your Lordships this afternoon, but which is of greater moment—namely, what are you going to substitute for your new Constitution if it is scrapped? In this country, and in every other country which works a Parliamentary system such as we have been trying to inaugurate in India, the Government would go out and its place would be taken by a Government drawn from another Party and accredited by a clear and definite programme of measures for the well being and advancement of the people. In India you will have nothing of that sort. You there have a perfectly simple and clear issue.

Either we adhere to the policy of gradually fitting India for self-government on modern lines, or we drop the whole idea and hand over the government of the country to men with no programme, with no considered political creed of national well being. At least, I have never heard of any creed or programme, and I do not think any of us could call the manifesto from which quotations were made last night a constructive programme. It was the workmanship of some of his more virulent lieutenants, but if you turn to Mr. Gandhi himself, and ask for a programme he would say: "Pay no taxes; buy your own spinning wheel and manufacture your own clothes, and thus you will reach the Promised Land." It is hardy on the strength of a creed of that sort that we shall be prepared to give up our trusteeship for the 300,000,000 of the Indian people.

We want India to come back to something that is much more real and more practical. The whole basis, as the Secretary of State pointed out lucidly and eloquently last night, of the present Constitution is co-operation between Englishmen and Indians in the government of the country, and the gauge of success is to be the work that is done by Indian leaders in that new co-operative government. Parliament has pledged itself to institute an Inquiry in 1929 as to the measure of that

success and to decide, on the materials which that Inquiry will supply, what further degree of political freedom may be given to India. It is true that the Nationalist conscience pretends to be shocked at this sequence of orderly advances. What right, it says, has the British Parliament to sit in judgment on India's fitness to manage her own affairs; their nation has grown up to maturity and is capable of carrying on its own business.

All we ask is that it should carry on its own business; that instead of wasting their time and energy in noisy declamations against our policy, there should be some clear and tangible results of the actual work in the sphere that has been assigned to Indian Ministers and legislators, a sphere which is ample enough to employ all their energies and engage all their patriotism. India has been offered freedom, but on one condition—that power and responsibility will be freely given to those who will undertake it and, by wisely exercising it, justify the gift. Let us stand by that absolutely healthy principle. If His Majesty's Government will stand by that principle and make it clear that every use is to be made of the safeguards which the Act provides against mischievous obstruction, and support, as I am sure they will, the Viceroy and his Governors in the exercise of the powers with which Parliament has specially invested them, we may believe and hope that India will gradually get over her difficulties and settle down into the paths of peaceful progress. It is vacillation that kills. Unintelligible changes of policy, which, in India, are so often ascribed to fear, parleying with forces which mean to concede nothing themselves while they demand and extort one concession after another from us—all this leads to nothing but increasing trouble and ultimate disaster.

I have spoken about safeguards. None of us want the safeguards to be all on one side. We want to see the self-esteem of India, which is the richest product of the new Nationalist movement, safeguarded in every possible manner. We want to see, whether it is in India, or in Kenya, or in any part of the King's Dominions, the spirit of co-operation enshrined in the heart of the British official and merchant just as much as it is in the heart of the Indian leaders. All this is quite possible. We cannot contest the desire for such amendments

of the new Constitution as may be shown to be necessary from the experience of the last three years. It is possible to be warm supporters of Indian reform, to believe firmly in helping India by every means towards her goal of Dominion status, to sympathise with the difficulties and in some respects with the suspicions of Indian leaders, without yielding to the emotions and excitements of the moment. We have given India a Constitution which will enable her, if it is properly used, to embark upon a constructive programme of building up an Indian nation. We are now asked by a section of the community not to build up but to pull down, and as our warrant we hear nothing but the parrot cry that it is necessary first to destroy in order to build anew. We have seen how that theory worked in Russia, and we are surely not going to allow a similar combination of inexperience and idealism to inflict similar horrors upon India.

THE EARL OF BALFOUR: My Lords, we have had, in the course of the interesting debate which occupied us yesterday and has recommenced to-day, speeches from the responsible Minister, who has behind him all the advice of a great Office, from my noble friend Lord Curzon, who was himself one of the greatest of Indian administrators, and now from the noble Lord who has just sat down, who has a personal experience which justly entitles him to the most careful attention of your Lordships' House. I have nothing to add to this debate which can be based upon knowledge such as they possess, and the very few words with which I shall trouble your Lordships represent perhaps rather the opinions of an outside observer than those of a man who, from personal observation, is justified in offering his view upon one of the most embarrassing problems which, I believe, has ever faced the Government of this country.

I was a member of the Government which was responsible for the Act of 1919. I was not in the country at the time—I was engaged in public service elsewhere—but I have not the slightest desire to minimise my own share of responsibility in carrying out the great and most difficult experiment in which we are engaged. I believe that the course that was then taken was certainly the best course that we could take with the knowledge then at

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our disposal. I am inclined to believe that even with the additions to our knowledge which have since accrued—additions not altogether of an agreeable kind—none of us, if it were in our power to repeat the experiment, would hesitate to make an effort in the direction in which the Act of 1919 points, nor do I believe that that Act could in any very important particular be amended for the better. But I do not think any of us can be well satisfied with the way in which that experiment is being carried out in India, not, indeed, by those over whom we have any control, but by those leaders of Indian public opinion who seem to me wholly to misunderstand the character of the problem which lies before us and the character of the duties which our position in India throws upon this country.

We are apt, I think, to look at this question of gradually giving constitutional government to India as a perfectly natural operation. I think the noble Lord who has just sat down spoke, quite properly, of "liberating" this Province or that Province, and a general impression gradually grows up in Parliament, in the country and in the Press that we are acting simply as a drag upon a natural movement towards representative institutions which, but for us, would run a safe, a happy and a useful course, and that those in India who are hampering our policy in every respect are in reality only hastening the glorious time when free institutions upon the model of the great self-governing Dominions will prevail in India. I am convinced that that is one of the most profound delusions that ever possessed mankind. Free institutions on the British model, or on the Dominion model, are among the most difficult institutions in the world to manage properly. Free government is a very difficult government. The easy government is the government of an absolute autocracy. The notion appears to be that if you leave India alone India will at one stride—taking an example from Great Britain, from the great British Dominions, from the United States of America, from other great free and self-governing communities—join their ranks as a natural equal. That is entirely to ignore the teaching of history.

This is not a question, as some people suppose, between inferior and superior. Do not let us use those words if we can

help it when we are dealing with races. You cannot say which is the superior, and which is the inferior, race. India is one of the oldest civilisations, perhaps the oldest, in the world. It has given great religions not merely to the hundreds of millions of its own population but to hundreds of millions of other Oriental populations. It has a civilisation compared with which ours is contemptible in point of date, and it is really absurd to say that we are superior, or that they are inferior. But we are different. All the world talks now of constitutional government on the English model as if it were the natural flower of all forms of culture and civilisation. It is nothing of the kind. It has been laboriously, through long centuries and with much difficulty, worked out with success in this island. It has been carried by the children who emigrated from this island to other continents. It has in their hands produced admirable results. It has been imitated—I will not say all over Christendom, but at least it has been more or less imitated all over the western hemisphere. But it is a very difficult constitution to work, and one of its great difficulties is that we are all apt to consider that that nation is most fitted for representative and Parliamentary institutions, for government by debate and discussion, which shows the greatest fertility of speech, the greatest ingenuity in devising Parliamentary manœuvres and in carrying out by Parliamentary methods, not the work of the country but the debates of the country. That is the external view which our form of government takes to the observer. But it requires national character, trained to that particular kind of work, to perform the fundamental duty of all Governments, which is that of governing.

These sound most commonplace observations, and they are commonplace, but they are constantly forgotten. We habitually talk as if you could import a new constitution into an old civilisation, as you import a new locomotive or a new mechanism, but the other, which depends upon the secular training of a people, which depends upon those qualities the very origin of which is lost in the prehistoric period of human development—~~institutions~~ institutions which depend upon that cannot be planted, or transplanted, with perfect security that they are going to

grow and flourish as they grew and flourished in the land of their birth. Consider what the special difficulties of India are in such a matter as this. India, as we all know, has got its secular immemorial culture, which has produced marvellous fruit in its way. Its history goes quite continuously back beyond the most distant records. In the whole of its history, as we know, or as we can plausibly conjecture it, I am not aware of any single trace of what we may call constitutional controversy, of debates such as fill our history, as to the proper methods by which human freedom may be developed on the plane of secular life. Marvellous things have been done on other planes, but on that plane nothing, so far as I know, has been done, and all that these modern statesmen in India do, or most of them do, is to take our catch-words, and to profess admiration for our institutions, but without apparently realising the spirit by which alone such institutions as ours can be properly worked.

Do not let it be supposed that I am pessimistic as to the ultimate result. All I say is that it is perfect folly to suppose that the result can be immediately attained. Indeed, I go further, and I say that all that is now going on in India increases my sense of depression with regard to the political elements in that country, because they do not seem to me to have grasped the first essence, the first beginnings of wisdom, in this matter of constitutional government. I have not the least doubt that they show infinite ingenuity in their Parliamentary manœuvres, and I do not in the least doubt that their speeches are eloquent, admirably delivered, coherent and logical, and contain all the qualities that we admire in Parliamentary oratory; but that is not the main thing that is required. I cannot imagine anything less suited to the efficient administration of public affairs than a House of Commons, or, if you will, a Second Chamber, entirely composed of ingenious and eloquent orators. There is no chance of our having it in this country, fortunately. We never have had it, and I see no symptoms that the disease is going to come upon us in our political old age. But that is not the sort of impression which is given to those who look at us from outside. They seem to think that because readiness of speech,

power of argument, and eloquence, are passports in this country to political success, those are the qualities which make us a successful free people. They are nothing of the kind. They are merely the external machinery by which those who represent the common sense of the people, determined to carry on the work of the community in a sober, quiet, and peaceful manner, carry out their great duties.

We have brought in a certain number of highly educated people in India and asked them to help us in beginning the work of spreading through India these ideas of free institutions. Do they show any one of the qualities and symptoms which are the very essence of these free institutions? They have shown all the qualities of contrivance, and ingenuity of Parliamentary obstruction, and all the smaller arts which hang about the practice of free institutions, but what they have not shown is that fundamental desire to make the Government of their country work, without which free institutions are not only perfectly useless but may be absolutely dangerous. I do not know that they have made any contribution in the whole centuries of Indian thought, or taken the smallest interest in these experiments of ours, which have slowly grown up into the free institutions of this country. They never have done so. They come fresh to the business, unanimated by the only thing which is worth having in the government of a free country, namely, the desire to make, irrespective of private or class interest, the work of the community go on. Their ingenuity is wholly destructive, so far as I can see. I am not aware that they have ever suggested a new scheme, or given a hint as to what is to happen if the British rule were to come to an end.

The noble Lord who last spoke described a banner on which he said was inscribed "Expulsion." Expulsion is not a policy. There is no construction in expulsion. By their own admission, tacit or explicit, all this desire for constitutional freedom is of exotic growth. It was born in these islands and not in the vast continent where they profess to rule. How do they mean India to be governed when expulsion is carried out? They might at least have given us an outline of the scheme. Have they done so? Are they going simply to pass a sort of Reform Bill for India, a sort of universal franchise?

The Earl of Balfour.

There never was a country in which the difficulties of constitutional government are naturally greater than in India. In the first place, there is no country so enormous on which any human being has ever thought of trying the experiment. Who has ever thought of trying representative constitutional government, on the ordinary Parliamentary model, on a community of three hundred million persons? It has never been tried before.

But that is not all. They have to contend with their own unlimited history of their own great culture. There never was a vast body of mankind who were more the creatures of their antecedents than are the people of India. Their traditions go back unbroken further than—I do not speak of the Chinese, but certainly than those of any Western nation. And it is not merely that. Their culture, religious and political, appears to have blossomed naturally into the complex system of caste. I am not going to argue against caste; I am not going to compare a community without caste with a community which is in the meshes of caste. But if caste be the natural outcome, as it is, of all these centuries of Indian civilisation undisturbed from outside, can you conceive a soil less apparently, and on the face of it, prepared for the ordinary democratic government, which is the one which we admire by our practice, and which they admire with lip-service so long as it can be used as a weapon to destroy the present organisation of society?

I am not going to attempt to preach to these Indian agitators what is their duty. To me, indeed, it seems quite obvious that they are committing a great crime against their fellow countrymen and against general civilisation if they set to work merely to shatter what they find, without giving us, or themselves, the least suggestion of what it is they want to put in its place. Nothing that I say is likely to move them, but, after all, we have a duty to perform, too. We find ourselves the masters of this vast continent. Not till we came was the great Indian continent ever welded into a great unity. Not till we came was it possible to find any mitigation in free institutions for the system of absolutism which has immemorably prevailed over that country—sometimes absolute Governments governing huge tracts of it, sometimes broken

up into smaller kingdoms, but always on the strictest absolutist system, uncontrolled by any authority based upon a broader scheme.

Now, for the first time so far as I know in the history of the world, we have in our own free institutions, in the criticism which takes place in the House of Commons, in this Chamber, in the British Press—we have been able to combine something that is good in the system of free institutions with all that can be found of good in absolute government. It is a wholly unknown combination so far as history goes. It has been worked by us in the time that we have had control, I believe, to the unmixed advantage of this huge population. What are you going to put into its place? If you leave India to herself it is as absolutely certain as anything can be that she will relapse into what is the natural organisation of society in that part of the world, which is absolute government. There may be a transition of free institutions, possibly—certainly. It would probably be found unworkable, intolerable in practice, unintelligible to vast masses of the population, and no prophecy can be so certain than that the destruction of British rule means the resumption of all that is least good in the gradual growth of Indian society.

Are we going so far to show ourselves incapable of carrying the burden which has gradually been thrust upon us as to leave these 300,000,000 to that most certain fate? I cannot believe it. There is no alternative that I can see but the alternative which was adopted in 1919, the alternative which His Majesty's Government accepted, which the noble Lord who has just sat down accepts, and for which my noble friend near me (the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston) spoke last night. We here are all at one upon that, but let us remember that by saying we insist on seeing how the experiment works we are not delaying free institutions in India. We are doing what we can to make one of the most difficult tasks ever undertaken a possible task. It may prove—please Heaven it will not so prove, but it may prove that the thing is impossible. It may prove that this new experiment of giving for the first time our special form of institutions to 300,000,000 people, divided by every

species of caste and religious division, is an impossible one. I hope better things.

But the idea that it can be done by a stroke of the pen, and that, if our hands are forced, these gentlemen, who have not shown that they possess the glimmer of a constructive idea in the whole of their mental outfit, can bring either freedom or felicity to the 300,000,000 people for whom we are responsible, is surely one of the most fantastic dreams that ever occurred to the wildest of political speculators. The task before His Majesty's Government, and before any Government that may succeed them, is one of extreme difficulty. We cannot shirk it. We cannot put it on one side. The burden is there, and must be borne. But it will require the utmost resolution, the utmost courage, the utmost patriotism, and a perfect contempt for catchwords if we are to carry it out ultimately with success.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 28th February, 1924.

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL. [H.L.]

Read 2^a.

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

LORD CLWYD: My Lords, I beg to postpone the Question which stands in my name on the Paper—to ask His Majesty's Government whether it is their intention to submit a Motion to both Houses of Parliament this Session for the appointment of the Standing Joint Committee on Indian affairs—until Wednesday next.

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL. [H.L.]

Committed.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Wednesday, 5th March, 1924.*STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON
INDIAN AFFAIRS.

LORD CLWYD: My Lords, I desire to ask His Majesty's Government whether it is their intention to submit a Motion to both Houses of Parliament this Session for the appointment of the Standing Joint Committee on Indian affairs? It is not necessary for me to take up the time of your Lordships' House in explaining the position in regard to this Committee. Your Lordships will remember that the setting up of this Standing Joint Committee was recommended by the Joint Select Committee which sat under the Chairmanship of the noble Earl, Lord Selborne, in the year 1919, and made a unanimous recommendation in favour of the appointment of a Standing Joint Committee for the purpose of bringing Parliament into closer touch with Indian Affairs. The Standing Joint Committee was appointed in the Session of 1921, and in the Session of 1922. It was also appointed last Session. When the Motion for the appointment of this Standing Joint Committee was made last year by the then Secretary of State for India, Lord Peel, your Lordships will remember that terms of reference were agreed upon which defined the functions of the Committee by making it clear that the Committee would deal in the future, first, with Bills or matters referred to it by either House of Parliament, and, secondly, with matters brought to its notice by the Secretary of State for India.

I fully recognise that in connection with the initial stages of a Parliamentary experiment of this kind, certain difficulties are bound to be encountered. I realise also that very great and rapid changes in India have their bearing, possibly, upon the future development of the work of this Committee. But I do not think that either of those considerations justifies the immediate abandonment of this attempt to bring Parliament into closer touch with Indian affairs. For this reason, and because I think that the Committee can and will answer a useful purpose under existing conditions, I beg to put my Question to the noble Lord in the hope that he, on behalf of the Government, may be able to give an affirmative reply.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, I am very much indebted to the noble Lord for his courtesy in twice postponing his Question until I should have had an opportunity of consulting my colleagues in His Majesty's Government. That I was able to do this morning, with the result that they accept the principle contained in the Question which is before your Lordships, and will submit a Motion to both Houses of Parliament for the setting up of the Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs. The terms of the Motion will follow exactly those of the Motion proposed last year in both Houses of Parliament.

LORD HARRIS: My Lords, having served upon that Committee, I was exceedingly glad to hear the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, state that the Motion would follow the terms of that proposed last year. I served on the Committee in the year previous to the adoption of the Motion last year, and I was aghast at the attempt of many well-meaning members of the Committee to bring up a variety of questions of such a magnitude and depth that no Committee could possibly have dealt with them in the course of a year. The members of the Committee are very busy men, and it is extremely difficult to find days upon which the Committee as a whole are able to serve. If we can put in two full days a week that is as much, so far as my experience goes, as we are able to do. The noble Lord knows already, from the complexity of Indian questions, that by giving only two days a week during the Session of Parliament it is quite impossible for the Committee to examine carefully many of the questions that could be referred to them in Bills or by himself. Therefore I am glad to hear that the Motion will follow the terms of that of the previous year.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Tuesday, 11th March, 1924.*STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON
INDIAN AFFAIRS.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, I beg to make the Motion, of which Notice has been given, for the appointment of a

Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs. As it was moved from this side of the House and supported from the other, I do not think that any arguments on my part are required in favour of it. I may say that the Committee, if it is set up, will be appointed to consider any matters referred to it by the Government or by Parliament. I am not aware that there are any questions of moment which we should desire to submit to the Committee immediately, but if that which was foreshadowed in the Indian Legislative Assembly should mature—namely, that the Government of India should consider the question of possible extensions or amendments of rules under the Government of India Act—that is the kind of subject which we should desire to refer to the Joint Committee.

Moved to resolve, That it is desirable that a Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to examine and report on any Bill or matter referred to them specifically by either House of Parliament, and to consider with a view to reporting, if necessary, thereon any matter relating to Indian affairs brought to the notice of the Committee by the Secretary of State for India.—(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint them therewith, and to desire their concurrence.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 18th March, 1924.

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL. [H.L.]

Committee to meet on Tuesday next.

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Message from the Commons that they concur in the Resolution of this House communicated to them on the 12th instant, That it is desirable that a Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to examine and report on any

Bill or matter referred to them specifically by either House of Parliament, and to consider with a view to reporting if necessary thereon any matter relating to Indian Affairs brought to the notice of the Committee by the Secretary of State for India.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 25th March, 1924.

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL. [H.L.]

Reported without amendment.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 26th March, 1924.

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL. [H.L.]

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 2nd April, 1924.

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, I beg to move the Motion standing in my name on the Paper.

Moved, That the following Lords be appointed to serve on the Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs, and that the Committee have power to agree with the Commons upon the appointment of a Chairman—

E. De La Warr,
E. Russell,
E. Midleton,
L. Harris,
L. Lamington,
L. Montagu of Beaulieu,
L. MacDonnell,
L. Pentland,
L. Hardinge of Penshurst,
L. Clwyd,
L. Meston.

—(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith, and to request them to appoint eleven Members of that House to be joined with the said Committee.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 9th April, 1924.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR HIGH OFFICIALS.

VISCOUNT PEEL: My Lords, I wish to ask His Majesty's Government whether they are able to make any announcement as to the introduction of a Bill for granting leave to Governors and other high officials in India. In doing so, I would call your Lordships' attention to Section 87 of the Government of India Act, 1915. I should like to quote to your Lordships the wording of that section, which declares that if the Governor-General, or a Governor, or the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in India, and, save in the case of absence on special duty or of leave under a medical certificate, if any ordinary member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General, or any member of the Executive Council of a Governor departs from India intending to return to Europe, his office shall thereupon become vacant.

Your Lordships will observe that the section is drawn in rather peculiar language. It is only if there is an intention to return to Europe that the office shall become vacant. One of these gentlemen might proceed to any part of Asia, or Africa, or America, but if he had not the intention of returning to Europe, however long he might be absent from his office, his position would not be vacated. Before the Act of 1919 this rule of rigid exile in certain cases applied to the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief and the three Presidency Governors, but owing, I will not say to an accident but possibly to a small oversight in the Act of 1919, this rule applies, not only to these five high officers whom I have mentioned, but also to the Governors of Provinces, because they are now styled Governors instead of Lieutenant-Governors, as they were before that Act. But it is perhaps rather a high price to pay for the increased honour and distinction of being called a Governor that they have, by that

change, lost the rights which they previously enjoyed of obtaining leave and coming to this country without vacating their positions.

This is a rule of very respectable antiquity. I understand that it was first set up in the year 1793, and noble Lords, according to their temperament, may take two views upon that point. Some might consider that the mere fact that the rule had existed for a hundred and thirty years was itself a *prima facie* case for altering it. Others might think that since the rule had endured so long, there was good reason to suppose that there might be a great deal to be said for it. In any case it is rather remarkable that, after all the great changes that have taken place, after the transference of powers from the East India Company to the Government and after the great changes that were made under the Act of 1919, this rule seems, somehow or other, to have survived. Nevertheless, its existence was not altogether unmarked, and there have been occasions when Bills were introduced, either in this House or in another place, to remedy what was considered a defect. Bills were introduced in the years 1888, 1891 and 1892, but for various reasons—generally, I think, through lack of time—these Bills did not become Acts. There were two other occasions on which an attempt was made to alter the rule. In 1902, when my noble friend the Leader of the Opposition was Viceroy of India, he wrote a very full and comprehensive Despatch on the subject, urging the abrogation of the rule. It is strange that his Despatch was not accepted. It fell through, I think, owing either to the doubt or the reluctance of the Secretary of State, and the matter was not further pressed. The question was again raised in 1921, when I think considerations of time prevented it from being carried through.

It is a rather remarkable fact that so far as I am aware—and this is a matter with which no doubt the Secretary of State is very familiar—as regards Colonial Governors, there is no such rule preventing them taking leave, or requiring them to vacate their posts if they take such leave, during their term of office, and I think I am right in saying also that, as regards the Colonial Governors of other Imperial Powers with great Dominions or Dependencies, such as Holland or France, there is no such

rule. Therefore, this is a somewhat singular and unique case, and, although I do not wish necessarily to compare the peculiar difficulties which have to be met, either by Colonial Governors of this or other countries, with our Indian problems I think there is a *prima facie* case for examining the rule rather more carefully. After all, there may have been very good reasons for that rule when it was first established in 1793. At that time Governors could not proceed expeditiously through the Red Sea or by aeroplane, but had to take a long voyage round the Cape of Good Hope. Therefore, it may have been necessary to limit the desires of these gentlemen to come home on a holiday which might occupy a rather considerable time and involve their being long absent from their posts.

I do not suggest that the rule should be altered merely because it has existed for a hundred and thirty years, but I think that there are solid reasons for altering it. Many reasons have developed in the last few years which render it advantageous to make such a change. I think it will be admitted generally by your Lordships, and particularly by those noble Lords who have held the position of Presidency Governor, that the duties of these Governors since the Act of 1919, and the constitutional changes therein contained, have greatly developed, and it becomes more than ever important to secure that these great posts should be filled by the best and most experienced Governors that can be obtained. No doubt, we have been very fortunate lately in the gentlemen who have proceeded to these posts, but I am sure we should greatly widen the field of choice if, in case of great urgency or of private business, they should not be debarred from returning to their own country at least once during their term of office. After all, the class of man that you wish to secure as Governor, who ought to have at this time of day considerable Parliamentary experience, is just the man who may have many ties in his own country, and it would make all the difference to his acceptance if he were able to look forward to a holiday in this country during his term of office. Nor do I omit this consideration, that the greater the strain thrown upon them during their term of office, the more essential it is that they should be refreshed by a couple of months in their own country, so that they may be able to

return with fresh vigour to their laborious duties.

As regards the Executive Councillors, of whom there are about thirty in India, and about half of whom are British at the present time, they can obtain leave, but only on medical certificate, and I submit to your Lordships that it is rather invidious that they should only be able to obtain leave on medical certificate. After all, none of us like to admit that we are debilitated in health and constitution, and, in fact, it is part of the reputation of a public man that he is healthy and vigorous. If we deal with the case of the Governors I think we ought to put the Executive Councillors on the same basis as Governors.

I have heard one or two objections to the proposal, but I do not think very great weight need be attached to them. It is said that during absence on leave you would have to find some *locum tenens*, and that as he is there for but a short time, and might be selected during a rather difficult period, his authority could not be so great as that of the Governor, whose tenure of office is more prolonged. That difficulty may be got over, because, of course, leave would only be granted at a time when no great problems were being presented to the Governor. There is the further idea that these Governors, or the Viceroy, coming over to this country might take the opportunity of having consultations or discussions with the India Office and that this might arouse suspicion in some minds in India that India was being governed too much from Whitehall, and that the natural jealousy of the authority exercised in Whitehall would be enhanced by the new procedure. I think a little tact and management would do away with any unfortunate suspicions that might be aroused.

It is also suggested that the Viceroy, on coming here, might perhaps, in consultation with the Government, decide on some course which might not be altogether advisable, and which might have been modified if he had taken his decision after full consultation with his advisers and councillors in India. There, again, I think you can trust the distinguished men who are sent out as Viceroy to exercise their own discretion and assert their own independence. Quite apart,

however, from any disadvantages or dangers which might be incurred, I think there might be great advantage—and I am speaking entirely from the point of view of India, of the Government of India and of the Viceroy himself—if one or two of these great officers could come over here, because India has at the present moment external relations of her own. Of course she is represented on the League of Nations. She has, in some cases, direct dealings with many of the great Dominions, such as, for instance, South Africa over the vexed question of Indians in that great Dominion. There are also her purely external relations with Afghanistan. That is a question connected with other foreign questions, and it would be a great advantage, I think, to the Viceroy, when on a visit here, to be able to come into touch with those currents of opinion with which he could not be so familiar in India, and on which his own judgment on important questions in India may have to be formed. Therefore, I rather invite in some cases the Viceroy taking a holiday over here, because of the specific advantages which he would in that way gain.

This matter, as the Secretary of State for India knows, was canvassed a great deal during the time of the last Government, and I obtained assent from the then Cabinet to the principle of a Bill dealing with this question of leave for Governors. We had a great deal of discussion with the Government of India, and the Government of India generally assented to our scheme. I am not dealing now with some of the perhaps difficult details with which the subject is connected. I am not dealing with the precise reasons for which leave should be granted, who should grant the leave, who should appoint the substitute, the *locum tenens*, during the absence of a Governor. Those are the matters which would have to be dealt with in a Bill, or, at any rate, power would have to be given to somebody to deal with them. I do not contemplate, and I hope the idea will not arise, that the custom should grow up of Governors taking leave; it is only that in certain cases it might be advantageous and necessary for them so to do.

I understand that this matter has been under the consideration of the Secretary of State, and I believe he is not out of sympathy with the general suggestions

Viscount Peel.

that I have made. I should like to ask him, as I do in my Question, whether he contemplates introducing a Bill dealing with this matter; when he is going to introduce it; whether it is to be introduced in this House or in another place; and whether, further, he can state that he intends—subject, of course, to those political exigencies in another place with which we have been familiar lately—to do his best to pass such a Bill into law and carry out what I believe, in the interests of India, will be a useful and necessary reform.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, the subject of the noble Viscount's Question has engaged my attention since I came to the India Office, where I found that it had already been a matter of correspondence between the noble Viscount and the Government of India, and my Department has drafted a Bill, which it is my intention at the end of business to-day to ask leave to introduce, and to have read a first time. I hope it will be read a second time to-morrow.

The noble Viscount has very agreeably relieved your Lordships' House of any necessity for me to recommend the Bill in a Second Reading speech, so that I hope it will pass through this House very rapidly, and then, I should suggest, be referred for consideration to that Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament which has recently been set up for dealing with Indian matters. I can assure the noble Viscount that this Bill has received the assent of the Cabinet, and will be proceeded with with all reasonable despatch.

There was one matter with regard to the interesting history of the present very draconian rule with regard to leave, to which the noble Viscount referred. I have made researches into the history of that matter, and I gather that the real reason for the very drastic rule that Governors in India should not leave their cure during their term of office was that, at the time that that regulation was made, the East India Company, being a commercial company, took cognisance of the manner in which direct representatives of the Crown in His Majesty's Dominions occasionally interpreted their duties. They interpreted their duties as Residents very laxly. For example, it was possible for a Registrar-General of the

Supreme Court of Jamaica to be appointed and to carry out the whole of the duties of his office in Westminster, receive all the fees, and appoint a deputy to act for him. And even more important representatives of His Majesty's Government at that time hung very loosely to their duties in the Dependencies. I think that the East India Company, being a business organisation, thought that they would guard against that. That state of things has now passed away, and no Governor or public official can leave his office except under the sanction of the Secretary of State, so that I entirely agree with all that the noble Viscount has said with regard to the reasonableness of now relaxing those rules.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, this is a change in the law which, in my opinion, has been long overdue. It has, of course, only a retrospective interest for ex-Viceroy's like my noble friend Lord Chelmsford and myself. But I happen to be an illustration of the anomalies of the present system, for, after I had been five and a half years in India, and when it was not only desirable but necessary that I should come home, in the interests of health and for other reasons, I was unable to do so under the existing law without having to resign my office. And hence it came about that another official, Lord Amthill, had to be appointed in my place, and in order to get the advantage of the six months' holiday I had not only to resign my office but to be reappointed for a second term when I went back. That, in itself, is an anomaly amounting almost to an absurdity.

The noble Lord, the Secretary of State, who has just spoken, has hinted at what he believes to be the explanation of the circumstances under which this rule arose. I do not think his statement really covers the whole ground, because so many Acts of Parliament were continually being passed into law in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century regulating the position, powers, and functions, *inter alia*, of the Governor-General, that the traditions of the East India Company had really long ceased to be the predominant consideration. The real reason why the Governor-General was not permitted to return to Europe, except at the cost of vacating his post, was because of the idea

that prevailed, both here and in India, that in his absence the machinery of government would break down. He was thought to be such an indispensable pivot of the whole system of administration—as, indeed, to a large extent he was—that, in his absence from the country, matters could not proceed.

And there was this amount of justification for the idea, that, as my noble friend behind me has explained, in those days in the early part of the last century there was no telegraphic communication with India at all, and communication by sea, before steamships were discovered, was so slow that it often took a year and a half for a letter to go from India to London and for the reply from London to go back. You can imagine that, in those circumstances, the Viceroy had a very much greater authority and power than, at the end of the telegraphic wire, he has now. Hence arose the belief—I think really a superstition—that his presence in India was absolutely indispensable. That it was not so, that his presence at headquarters was not really indispensable, was shown by the fact that, even during the time of which I am speaking, the Governor-General constantly went away from Bengal, from Calcutta which was the seat of government, on prolonged tours into what were then called the Upper Provinces. There were no railways in those days. He had to proceed slowly, either by boats upon the river, or by camp marches across the land, and on some occasions he was away for a whole year. No doubt that caused some inconvenience to the Government machinery, but government did not break down.

Take another group of cases. My noble friend Lord Peel mentioned that the rule, while it prohibits departure from India of these high officials, in the case of return to Europe, did not prohibit it in other cases. And you have the fact that the first Lord Minto, in the early part of the last century, himself accompanied a military expedition to Java, and was absent from India for many months at a time. Lord Dalhousie, who suffered a great deal from ill-health, on one occasion went for the sake of his health on a sea voyage as far to the East as Sumatra and Singapore. And during my own tenure of office, if I may mention my own experience, I was allowed, or rather

I was authorised, to go as far West as the Persian Gulf. And, therefore, the idea that the Viceroy or the Governor-General, even at that time, was an absolutely indispensable feature of the Government in India I think was, if not illusory, at any rate very much exaggerated.

The noble Viscount behind me has mentioned the attempts that have been made to deviate from that ancient rule. By some curious accident I have been connected with most of them. I was Under-Secretary for India in another place when the Bill of 1891-92 was introduced into, and carried through, your Lordships' House. The Bill abolished this restriction, except in the case of the Viceroy. An Amendment was moved in the House of Lords—I forget whether it was by Lord Northbrook or some one else—excluding the Viceroy: I think a very great mistake. When I was in India in 1902 I sent the Despatch to which my noble friend referred. He expressed some doubt as to why the proposals had been turned down by the India Office or, at any rate, had not been adopted, but I have not the slightest doubt myself as to the reason. The reason was that my arguments were wholly unanswerable, and the consequence was that as no answer was forthcoming, or could possibly be found, they thought the best thing to do was to say nothing at all. Then my noble friend Lord Chelmsford appeared upon the scene in 1921. I do not think I have seen his Despatch, but I have no doubt that it was on similar lines.

VISCOUNT CHELMSFORD: It followed the same lines as yours.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I pay my noble friend the compliment of saying that he was also unanswerable; but we have both had to wait until this afternoon for the fruition of our arguments. Then as to procedure. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State, has suggested that if he introduces his Bill and gets a First Reading to-day, he should put down the Second Reading for to-morrow. May I suggest to him that it is not as if the noble Viscount, Lord Chelmsford, and I, or the ex-Secretary of State, were the people only or even principally concerned? This change in the law is to apply to the Commander-in-Chief, and to the Governors, not merely

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.

of Madras and Bombay, but of all other Lieutenant - Governorships which have now become Governorships. Therefore, there is a considerable class of persons to whom it would apply.

Now a good many of the ex-officials in this class, particularly in the class of Governors of Madras and Bombay, are members of your Lordships' House. I should say that we have at least six or eight here, and I must confess that I think it would be only fair to allow them an opportunity of being present when the matter comes up for discussion on Second Reading. After all, the reform, though urgent, has waited for one hundred and thirty years, and, therefore, it cannot be a question of minutes. There can be no question of immediate urgency as to the date on which it is passed into law.

As to the further question of the reference to the Indian Committee composed of members of both Houses of Parliament, I would like, if the Secretary of State will allow me, to consider that proposition. I am not quite sure that this is the class of measure that it was intended to refer to that Committee or whether it would be altogether desirable to do so. Perhaps the noble Lord will allow me, as the suggestion is a novel one, to consider it before I express a further opinion.

I should like to confirm, from a personal recollection, what was said on one point by my noble friend behind me. He was stating the reasons for making the change and, first and foremost among them, naturally enough he put the reason that a situation may very easily arise in which it is of the highest importance, both to the head of the administration in India and to the Government at home, that a personal consultation should take place between the two. I certainly can testify to that from my own experience of now nearly a quarter of a century ago. The second reason he named was that it is very desirable not to restrict but, on the contrary, to widen the range of choice for these important and responsible posts. I have in my mind a conversation which I once had with the first Lord Goschen who, at one stage in his official career, was offered the post of Viceroy of India by Mr. Gladstone. He declined it, and I asked him long afterwards why he declined it, because he had not only many aptitudes but many inclinations for such

a type of service. The reason he gave me was the existence of what he called "this cruel law"; that he could not agree to cut himself off from all contact with this country, whatever his state of health or whatever the exigencies of public business, for a period of as much as five years. Therefore India lost the chance of including that distinguished man among the list of its Governors-General.

The only other point which at this stage I should like to mention is that I hope the Bill which the noble Lord adumbrates will deal very carefully with the circumstances in which, and the limitations under which, this leave is to be granted. I wholly agree with my noble friend Lord Peel in saying that those who, like himself and like me, advocate the change have no idea in our minds of making it a regular practice that every Viceroy, or Governor, or Commander-in-Chief should think it a part, so to speak, of his right to come home once during his term of office. You have against that, of course, a certain guarantee in the feeling of a man who is keen and interested in his work that if he takes his hand off the plough some other less beneficent instrument may be laid upon it, and that, no doubt, will operate to some extent as a check. But the moment you did introduce something that might be mistaken for a regular practice, you would find that there would be a regular procession of attempts to take advantage of this leave. We must certainly avoid that.

Secondly, you will have to be very careful indeed as to the steps that you take for the nomination of a successor to the man who is absent in these conditions. Thirdly, if you permit these officials to come home, I hope that the Bill will not provide, under the altered conditions of swift communication by sea—and, I suppose, one may even throw in the air—too long a holiday for the officials to whom I refer. With these remarks, I welcome the intention of the Government to introduce the Bill to which reference has been made. I hope they will not put it down for Second Reading to-morrow, but will do so at a date after the Easter Recess, and perhaps my noble friend the Secretary of State will allow me to speak to him at a later date about his suggestion of the Committee.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, as one of those present in this House to-day who

took part in the last debate upon this subject, I hope you will allow me to say a few words upon the present occasion, and all the more so because on that occasion it was my duty to express, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, a decided opposition to the proposal which has been accepted by the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India. I remember—indeed, I have refreshed my memory of the fact—that I spoke with some strength against the proposal. I admit that I had no particular views of my own, but my instructions from the India Office were that it was a proposal which was to be resisted to the bitter end. And the same point of view was taken by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Elgin (who had great experience in India) when he spoke later in the debate. Upon the last occasion, as I have said, I spoke on instructions from the India Office. Beyond that I have no views on the subject, and I shall be prepared, being once convinced by the authority of noble Lords who know more about it than I do, to vote for the measure proposed by the noble Lord, the Secretary of State.

There are, however, one or two things which ought to be said. It is true that the rule of the Viceroy is particularly of a personal character. It is different from that of the Governors-General of self-governing Dominions. I was very glad to hear both from the noble Viscount who spoke first and from the noble Marquess who spoke last of their anxiety that this should not become a rule, but should only be done on special occasions. I would ask the noble Lord, the Secretary of State, whether he could not in some way insert in the provisions of the Bill some form of words which would indicate that that was the intention. Your Lordships will readily understand that a measure of this kind, once introduced, would be taken advantage of, and there would be a tendency for it to become the custom to take leave. That is not the intention of the noble Lord, the Secretary of State, nor is it the intention of the noble Marquess who spoke last, but I am afraid that, unless something special is done, it might come to be the custom instead of being the exception.

One word, perhaps, I may say by way of precaution. On referring to the debate which took place on the last occasion I

noticed that the balance of opinion of those noble Lords who have experience of India was against the carrying out of this experiment. Of those who took part in the discussion the majority were against this innovation. But beyond that I do not desire in any way to enter any sort of opposition to the measure. At the same time, I rather join with the noble Marquess who spoke last in expressing a very strong hope that His Majesty's Government will not proceed to carry the Second Reading to-morrow of a measure which we have not yet been able to see in print.

LORD LAMINGTON: My Lords, I do not wish to detain you more than a moment. I merely wish to say, with reference to the procedure in connection with this Bill, that I agree with the views of the noble Marquess. No doubt, the Committee might be able to offer useful advice, but in view of the considerations referred to by the noble Marquess it does seem to me that it would be a waste of time to refer the Bill to the Committee. We have been waiting 130 years for the Bill, and there can be no harm in waiting a little longer; at the same time, I agree that it is desirable that we should make progress with it.

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, I should like to reply to the two points that have been raised with regard to procedure. If it is the feeling of the noble Marquess and those who act with him that we should not take the Second Reading to-morrow I will certainly defer it. I suggested to-morrow because I thought it might be useful if we could get this Bill through fairly early, and to-morrow I believe is the last day on which this House will sit until after the Easter Recess. I also considered that it might be desirable to refer the Bill to the Joint Committee because we set up that Committee to deal with Indian matters, and it seemed to me, uninstructed as I am, that it might not be altogether courteous entirely to ignore that body. If, however, the noble Marquess will guarantee the Labour Government against any imputation of that sort, and will say that it is quite proper for us to withhold this Bill from that Joint Committee, the Government will be relieved of the necessity of so referring it. If the noble Marquess wishes I will accede to the suggestion that the Bill should be put off till after Easter.

Earl Beauchamp.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, I can only speak again with the permission of the House. My reason for suggesting that the Joint Committee might not be altogether the most desirable body to deal with this matter arose not from any suspicion of that body, still less from any desire to derogate from its importance, but from the belief that this Bill had better be dealt with by the whole House. Here you will have, sitting in Committee in your Lordships' House, the whole of the Governors and high officials to whom I referred, and I think it would be almost better that you should have an expression of their views here rather than that the matter should go to the Joint Committee first. Of course, if it goes to the Joint Committee it will come back to this House, and they would not be denied the opportunity of expressing their views, but the last thing I should like to see would be any conflict of opinion or attitude between the Joint Committee and either this House or the other House of Parliament. It was my conviction that we were thoroughly able to deal with the matter ourselves that made me rather deprecate the reference to the Committee which was suggested.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, I ask leave to introduce the Government of India Bill, which is a Bill to make provision with respect to leave of absence from India of the Governor-General, Commander-in-Chief, Governors, and members of Executive Councils, and with respect to the appointment of Commander-in-Chief; and to move that it be read a first time.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 1^a.—
(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Bill read 1^a; and to be printed.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 11th April, 1924.

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have appointed a Committee of eleven Members to join

with the Committee appointed by this House as mentioned in their Lordships' Message of April 3.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 6th May, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

To be read 2^a on Thursday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 8th May, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, the purpose of this Bill is to mitigate the very severe rule that now prevails with regard to the tenure of office of a Governor, or Governor-General, in India by which he is compelled to remain for seven years continuously in India, and can receive no leave either on account of his own health or in order to consult with the Secretary of State in England if it should be necessary or desirable for him to do so. The principle of the Bill was accepted by the noble Viscount, my predecessor in the India Office, who, not very long ago, raised the whole question in this House and put before your Lordships very fully and eloquently the reasons why he was convinced that such a Bill was desirable. And in regard to the principle of the Bill he was supported by the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition and by one or more other members of this House familiar with Indian affairs. Consequently, as to the principle of the Bill, I think I shall have no difficulty in assuming that your Lordships are prepared to agree to it.

With regard to the contents of the Bill I have to make certain observations. The Bill, as drafted, may be subject to certain verbal Amendments which I shall propose in Committee. The only points I need

notice in regard to those Amendments are these. In Clause 1, subsection (3), it is proposed that

"Where the Governor-General, or the Commander-in-Chief, or a governor or a member of an executive council obtains leave of absence in pursuance of this section, he shall retain his office during his absence, but if his absence exceeds the period for which leave is granted his office shall become vacant."

The question was raised on the First Reading of the Bill as to whether any limitation should be placed on the length of time for which a Governor should be granted leave and also whether he should be allowed leave more than once during his term of office. We are disposed to limit the period of a leave of absence which may be granted to a Governor to six months and to limit his leave altogether to one period of leave. We propose to do that by means of Rules under the Act as provided for in the earlier part of Clause 1:

"Subject to such conditions and limitations as may be prescribed by Rules."

In the substituted Section 87 (1), there was a slight omission in the drafting of the Bill, because it does not provide for the appointment of a Governor to act in place of any Governor who may have been appointed to act as Governor-General and we propose, therefore, to insert, after the word "Governor," the words

"or when a Governor is appointed in pursuance of this section in place of the Governor-General,"

so that the same condition may apply to the Governor acting for the Governor-General as applies if he is going on leave himself or as applies to the Governor-General when he is going on leave.

With regard to the filling of all these vacancies while the officers are on leave we propose to insert in the instructions to the Governor-General that if the Governor-General or any Governor desires to go on leave the Governor-General is to submit to the Secretary of State a recommendation for filling the vacancy. The Secretary of State will consider the recommendation and will in most cases, obviously, act upon it. The Governor-General was consulted on the subject, and we propose to provide for that by instructions to the Governor-General. We did not think it necessary to put them in the Bill.

Another Clause to which I might call attention is Clause 3 which provides that the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in India is appointed by His Majesty by Warrant under the Royal Sign Manual. At the present time there is no statutory provision for the appointment of the Commander-in-Chief, but, as we propose to make this Bill apply to the granting of leave to the Commander-in-Chief, it seems reasonable to make statutory the method of appointing the permanent incumbent of the office of Commander-in-Chief. It is the actual method, and we simply place in the Bill what has hitherto been omitted—namely, the statement that the Commander-in-Chief in India is appointed by His Majesty under the Royal Sign Manual. Clause 4 simply enables this Act to be incorporated with the Government of India Act in general when that Act is reprinted. I beg to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2^a.—
(*Lord Olivier.*)

LORD HARRIS: My Lords, I am very glad that His Majesty's Government have at last taken this matter in hand. More than twenty years ago I called the attention of the House to the anachronism of the then four high Indian officials—there are more now—being debarred by Act of Parliament from taking leave even when it was very necessary upon a medical certificate. To show how ridiculous it was I pointed out that Lord Milner, who was then High Commissioner in South Africa—an appointment certainly as important as that of the Governor of a Presidency in India—was at that very moment in England, and that the Governor-General of Canada could at that time take leave, while these four unfortunate persons were prevented from doing so.

On March 31, 1895, the Presidential Commanders-in-Chief were debarred from taking leave. On the very next day they were doing precisely the same work, but because they were no longer entitled Commanders-in-Chief, but were known as General Officers Commanding the Western or the Southern Army, as the case might be, they could go on leave. A life which was very valuable at that time—that of Sir William Lockhart—might have been saved had it been possible to give him

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leave; but it was not possible. My noble friend Lord Elgin was very ill indeed and was sent out to the Bay of Bengal for quite a considerable time in order to give him a change. He was not vacating his post, because he was not going west of Cape Town which, I believe, was the limit to which a Viceroy might go under the Act.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My noble friend will pardon me, but the Viceroy could go anywhere he liked except to Europe.

LORD HARRIS: Could he go west of the Cape of Good Hope?

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Yes.

LORD HARRIS: I am obliged to the noble Marquess, but that was my impression twenty years ago. The Governor of Bombay could in those days spend six months on the Somali coast and enjoy a very nice holiday with plenty of shooting. The Governor of Madras could spend what time he pleased in the Lacadive Islands without offending against the Act. The Government of the day, however, were indisposed to deal with the matter, although in 1887 a special Act was passed in order to enable the illustrious Duke of Connaught to return home to attend Her Majesty's Jubilee, and a Bill was brought in about 1891 by the then Marquess of Salisbury and passed through several stages in your Lordships' House but did not get any further. I think your Lordships will agree that it is an anachronism in these times, when the facilities for travel are so very much better than they were twenty years ago, that these unfortunate officials should not be allowed to take leave. I do not imagine that there are many of them who will want to take leave. I should think it is likely that they will be disposed to do so only when their health is such that there is danger of its being seriously affected otherwise. I can see no possible disadvantage in putting these officials upon the same basis as the other high officials who are at the head of affairs in His Majesty's Dominions. Therefore I heartily support the Bill.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, I think this Bill is one of sufficient importance to justify serious

attention being devoted to it by your Lordships' House and that an unfavourable impression would be produced if, owing to the reticence or modesty of any of our members who are qualified to speak upon it, your Lordships gave, as I have no doubt you will give, your assent to the Second Reading without understanding the implications which that will involve and without considering very seriously the manner in which it is proposed to make the contemplated change. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, said that we had had something in the nature of a Second Reading discussion upon the Question raised by my noble friend Lord Peel a few weeks ago. That is true; but for my own part I was glad to hear my noble friend Lord Harris, in the observations which he has just made, treat the matter *de novo* and from the resources of his own experience state to us how essential he thought it was in the public interest that these modifications in the existing law should be made.

I do not know that it is necessary to go at any length into a recapitulation of the causes which justify this change in the law, but I think I could sum them up in a single sentence for those who have not had an opportunity of following our former discussion, if I say this. In the first place, it is, as Lord Harris has pointed out, a strange anomaly and, indeed, an anachronism, to use his own expression, that these high officials in India are the only high officials of Government in the Empire (and the same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Governments of foreign States) who are denied the opportunity for any reasons, however urgent, of coming home during their tenure of office except at the price of having to resign the appointments which they hold.

In the second place, there is the absurdity, to which my noble friend Lord Harris referred, that under the existing law any one of these high officials—I am speaking more particularly of the Viceroy, or the Commander-in-Chief—may go as far afield as he likes (far further afield than the Cape of Good Hope, I can assure my noble friend) provided only that this excursion, for whatever object it be undertaken, is not intended to culminate in a visit to Europe. That is an absurd and indefensible provision. Then remember that this anomaly which I have described is all the more anomalous

because under the law you refuse to these high officials of the Government of India the opportunities which are enjoyed by all the lower grades in the same Service.

That is the extent of the anomaly. But now observe its operation. I ask your Lordships to bear in mind that this restriction has exercised in the past, and, if unmodified, will continue to exercise in the future a most unfortunate limitation on the choice of the persons you send. It is within my knowledge that both in the case of the Viceroy of India, and in the case of Governors of Presidencies, men of the highest position and repute, well fitted for such an office, have been compelled to refuse it because of the rigour of the existing law which would deprive them, for a period of five years, of any opportunity of returning to this country. Again I think it might be said that it is hard upon the man himself. You place upon your Viceroy, or your Commander-in-Chief, or Governors, no mean burden. You send them away to a distant, and in some respects rather a trying climate, for a period of five years, and you say: "You are, for no reason whatever, however pressing, during that time to be at liberty to return and have a vacation," except at the price which I have stated.

But stronger even than that is the case of what I describe as the public interest. I do emphatically lay it down that it is an absurdity that in this particular Service, alone of all the great Services of the State, no means exist, as the matter at present stands, for personal conference or consultation between the heads of the Government here, and the corresponding heads in India. When I was at the Foreign Office and was confronted with a serious situation of affairs in Europe, or beyond Europe, I sent for His Majesty's Ambassador, and he came at once to confer with me at home. Lord Harris very justly pointed out that in the case of the South African War, the Government, who were in a very anxious position here, sent for Lord Milner, the High Commissioner, to come all the way from South Africa. The same considerations apply to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The noble Lord himself has been a Colonial Governor. I do not know whether he was summoned home during his tenure of office, but it is not by any means an uncommon thing. There is

nothing to prevent my noble friend who is First Lord of the Admiralty now, if he saw the necessity, summoning the Commander-in-Chief from the China Station or any other station, however remote, to come and consult with him. The only persons in the wide ambit of the British Empire in regard to whom you lay it down that you will only communicate with them by telegram or letter are these high Indian officials.

I remember Lord Salisbury saying to me once—he had been Secretary of State for India and Prime Minister—that the course of history might have been changed if he had had the opportunity, or if the Government of which he was the head had had the opportunity, of bringing themselves into personal consultation with the head of the Government of India. If I may for a moment quote my own experience, it was chequered, and in some respects tragic. I can well conceive that the situation might have been materially altered had the opportunity been accorded to me which it is proposed by this change in the law to afford in the future. I think I need not labour that, because on that general aspect of the case I take it we are all agreed. I think we shall also all be agreed on this: that it is a privilege, if it be granted (and I do not deny that it is a privilege) that must not be abused, and that it is a privilege that must not be lightly or frivolously used in the future. The last thing that any of us want, and the main point against which we must safeguard in this Bill, is lest the privilege, once accorded, should gradually slip into being a general practice, and be regarded as a right to which every Viceroy, or every Governor for the matter of that, would think that he had a claim, and which he would proceed, in the ordinary course of events, to exercise.

The remarks which I shall pass upon the Bill are—assuming that we are agreed upon the principle—directed to ensuring that these risks shall not occur. I come, therefore, to the conditions and securities which it is desirable to obtain, and I observe that none of these are stated—with one exception, to which I will come in a moment—in the text of the Bill which is under our examination. On the contrary, the Government, while clearly contemplating that such conditions are required, propose to provide for them by Rules in accordance with

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the terms of the Government of India Act. I shall state presently the reasons why I think that is a thoroughly undesirable method of procedure, and that instead of entrusting them to Rules, which may be little known, which may even be subject to alteration from time to time, it is much better that we should be above board and state plainly to the knowledge of the public both in England and in India what are the conditions under which we propose that this privilege shall be available.

The first conditions that it is our duty to discuss are those of time. The noble Lord just now gave us an indication that what the Government have in view is this. They propose to put in the Rules a limitation of the period of absence to six months. I think that is too much. The conditions have radically changed in proportion as your means of communication with India have themselves improved both in quality and in rapidity. You now get to India, or from India, in a little over a fortnight. Therefore, the double journey to and fro need not occupy more than four or five weeks at the most. Assuming, as I am going to do, that the objects for which the returning Governor, or Viceroy, or Commander-in-Chief is to be allowed to come are only those of urgent importance, I think that it would be ample to provide that the total absence from date of departure from India to date of return to India should be four months. Four months is one-third of a year, and amounts to seventeen and a half weeks. If you deduct from that the five weeks for the journey to and fro you will get some twelve to thirteen weeks—close upon three months—which the returned official would be able to spend in this country.

Allusion has been made by the noble Lord to the proposal which was made by the Government of India when I was its head in 1902. At that time we proposed a limitation of three months. I do not know what period my noble friend Lord Chelmsford put in his Despatch of 1921, because I have not seen it.

VISCOUNT CHELMSFORD: I do not think we mentioned any details; we only adopted the principles.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: We recommended three months, although that was, perhaps, too short. I should be disposed myself to urge upon

your Lordships, if you put into the Bill a limiting period, that it should be four months.

The Secretary of State mentioned just now that this privilege of leave should be accorded to the official who receives it only once during his term of office. That it seems to me, is exceedingly wise, and in the event of a case occurring in which a man might want, for the second time, for any of the reasons to which I will presently refer, to come home, I think, if it occurs twice in his term of office, he ought to resign. Once would be quite enough to give him this privilege, and in the event of his being compelled to resign under circumstances of any hardship there is nothing whatever to prevent His Majesty's Government from re-appointing him, as, indeed, they re-appointed me some twenty or so years ago.

I come next to the other restrictions which we ought carefully to lay down as securities against abuse. The noble Lord has provided some in the Bill, and very good they are. He lays down, for instance, that in the case of the Viceroy coming home the consent of the Secretary of State in Council is required; that in the case of the Commander-in-Chief or a Presidential Governor coming home, the consent of the Secretary of State in Council shall be required on application from the Governor-General in Council, and that in the case of members of the Executive Council the consent of the Governor-General in Council or of the Governor in Council or of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, shall be required. That seems to be to be entirely to the good.

But I now come to the main point of my remarks. Let us consider very carefully the conditions under which, and under which alone, leave ought to be given. I take it that they are three in number. There is, first, the condition of a man coming home, or being sent for to come home, for "urgent affairs of State." There is, secondly, the condition under which he may require to come home on grounds of ill-health, and there is, thirdly, the condition under which urgent matters of private interest may compel his return. Let me deal with each of these for a moment.

I have already indicated that in the opinion of all those who have been con-

nected with the Government of India it may be desirable to provide an opportunity in the public interest for such conferences as I have referred to. Let me give your Lordships the kind of cases in which, either in the case of the Viceroy or Commander-in-Chief, or both, such power of personal conversation might be of the highest importance. Let us imagine cases in which a war threatened on the frontiers of India, or in which serious trouble arose with Afghanistan. Let us, again, imagine cases arising out of the Army and military affairs, in which there might be proposals of a very serious character either for the diminution or the augmentation of the Indian Army; or cases in which the question of co-operation between the military forces of the Home Government and the Indian Government might be involved. On all such cases, and they are matters of urgent public importance, I can conceive it very likely indeed that the Government at home might think it desirable to summon the Viceroy or Commander-in-Chief. And do not let us regard it only from the point of view of the Government at home; it might equally be in the interests of the Government of India.

With the ocean lying between, and with the difficulty we have all experienced of making our case understood by telegraph or on paper, many cases might occur over 7,000 miles of ocean of misunderstanding which a few hours' conversation might dispose of. You cannot do it under the present system. The whole history of India might have been different and many Governor-Generals in the past whose careers have ended in trouble and disaster might have been saved if they had had an opportunity for a few words with the Secretary of State and with the Government at home. I could easily establish my contention by references, but I refrain from doing so, because I do not think anybody will dispute the general validity of what I am venturing to urge.

Next take the case of health. My noble friend Lord Harris alluded to one case with which I happen to be personally familiar—Sir William Lockhart. When I went out to India he was Commander-in-Chief, a man who had risen to that position by his unaided abilities and merits; a man of great strength of character, universally popular and with an assured future of public usefulness

before him. He was stricken down by illness, and I was told by his physician that his life would have been saved had it been possible for him to return to England. He could not afford to do so. He had no security that he would be re-appointed to his position, someone would have stepped into his shoes. That valuable life was lost to the State, his services were lost to the Empire, because of this cruel, unfeeling and, I think, unnecessary rule.

Take the case of private affairs. None of us likes to talk about these matters in public, but the whole history of the Viceroys and Governor-General of India is seamed with streaks of personal tragedy, sorrow and suffering. Men out there have lost their wives at home, have lost their children at home, and could not come back either to see or make arrangements for the loved one who died. It is not only cruel, it is almost monstrous, to say that in these circumstances a man should not be allowed the common privileges which humanity would concede to every one. Unless the law is changed he must resign his office in order to do so. One of the conditions under which this change in the law will have to be applied must therefore be that of domestic concern. In the Bills to which Lord Harris has referred, introduced in your Lordships' House and passed here—it was only in the other place that they were not taken up—in 1891 and 1892 (I was Under-Secretary at the time), a provision was introduced that the leave which was contemplated should be granted either on public grounds or by reason of illness attested by a medical certificate. I do not approve of either of those words because they are too loose and too vague. "Public grounds" may cover almost anything, and as for a "medical certificate"—in India there is not one of us who cannot get a medical certificate any morning, evening or night, saying that we should be all the better for a change of air in this country. Therefore, I think we want to be a good deal less loose and more precise in our terms.

I shall be disposed at a later date to recommend for the consideration of your Lordships that the conditions under which leave may be given should be stated more precisely; perhaps somewhat as follows. I think you will find it wise, in order to prevent abuse, to make* a

distinction, which in my view can be entirely justified when you are speaking of public interest, between the case of the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief on the one hand and a Governor and other high officials on the other. I do not think any one contemplates it as desirable that these officials, eminent as they are, would require to be summoned home on grounds of public interest in order to consult with the Government at home. I think it would be desirable to lay down in the case of the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief that should the situation arise leave should be given for urgent reasons of public interest, or of health, or of private affairs. My words, you will see, demand that the reasons in each case should be urgent, and I think that will save you from the kind of abuse which I have hinted at as possible. Those three conditions should, I think, apply to the case of the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief, and the conditions as regards health and private affairs would properly apply to the remaining high officials who are concerned.

I come now to another question of minor importance but not insignificant, and that is the question of the salary paid while the official is away. In all the previous legislation upon this matter definite proposals have been made. For instance, in the Bills of 1891 and 1892, as originally introduced, power was given to the Secretary of State in Council to determine what part, if any, of the salary of the Viceroy, or Commander-in-Chief, or Governor, not exceeding one-half, should be paid to him, provided he returned to India. That provision was a little altered in Committee in your Lordships' House, and it finally emerged in this form:

"Any such officer shall receive for the period of his absence from India such part of his salary and, when his presence in England is required on public grounds, such expenses of his voyage from and to India, as the Secretary of State in Council shall direct."

We must consider this matter very carefully because, although it is quite true that the Secretary of State contemplates doing a number of things by Rules in the future, and although he may very likely say to me that he proposes to deal with this question by Rules, yet at the same time, if you look at the Bill in its present form, you will see a definite statement on

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page 2 which implies, if it does not actually state, that the incumbent will receive the full emoluments of the office which he is temporarily holding.

Is that quite just? In the first place, are you to deny to your Viceroy, or your Governor, or your Commander-in-Chief, when he comes home, any share or portion of his emolument? That does not happen in any other service in the world. If a Colonial Governor, or an Ambassador, comes home, he receives a certain portion of his salary while he is away. Supposing you send for the Viceroy, supposing he does not want to come, but you say: "You must come, because we want to discuss Afghan affairs with you," is it to be contemplated, in the first place, that the Viceroy should have to pay for his journey to and fro? I am sure it is not. In the second place, even if that be provided for by Rules, is it contemplated that he is to receive nothing during his compulsory residence in this country? I think that would be unfair. I am not suggesting for a moment that my noble friend Lord Olivier has that in mind, but I am suggesting that this House and the public ought to be clearly informed of the views of the Government, and to know exactly what is going to happen.

Let me give an illustration of the kind of way in which it would operate. Ordinarily speaking, a Viceroy, or a Governor, coming home would come at what I may call the slack season, in the hot weather. Let us suppose his period of absence is four months, as I suggest, or six months, as the Secretary of State suggests. Is it right that the temporary incumbent who succeeds him should take one-third, or one-half, as the case might be, of the total emolument of the officer in question for the year, when he would be receiving that pay at a time of year when in all probability the social obligations laid upon him would be very small indeed? I think that would be an injustice. What we proposed, I think, in 1902, when I was Viceroy, was this: we definitely proposed that the expenses incurred by the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief and the Governors in going to and fro should be paid by the State, and we also proposed that the acting officer who filled their places should, in accordance with the Rule that applies to Members of the

Council both of the Governor-General and of Madras and Bombay, draw half the pay of their substantive office and half the pay of the office in which they were acting. That was carefully thought out in the Departments of the Government at that time, and I think there were good reasons for it. I mention the matter now only because, when we come to the Committee stage, it is one of the points about which, no doubt, the noble Lord will be ready with an explanation, and upon which I think we ought to be very precise in order to prevent injustice being done either one way or the other.

I now come to the concluding part of the Bill, which is really, in my view, of more importance than any other. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State, indicated in his speech, and, indeed, it is laid down in the Bill as drafted, that all of these matters, or at any rate the bulk of them, to which I have been referring shall be prescribed by Rules made under Section 94 of the Act. I very much object to that provision, and I do so for this reason. It was not found necessary in the Bills of 1891 and 1892. There we stated quite clearly and explicitly the conditions as regards time, as regards reasons, as regards salary, which we were prepared to introduce into the law. This practice of legislating by Rules is one which is not only capable of great abuse but has been greatly abused for many years past. During the war we carried it, for reasons with which everybody is familiar, to lengths which, even if they were undue, had at any rate a great deal of justification. But now that we have reverted to more normal times, I think the more we legislate by Rules the nature of which is unknown, which remain to be disclosed in the future, which are to be laid upon the Table of the House, where nobody sees them, and which, if they are laid upon the Table and seen, will provoke renewed discussion in your Lordships' House about a matter which ought not to be made the theme of constant debate here—the more we legislate in these conditions by Rules the worse, as a general principle, is the result.

Observe another feature. We are going to make a great change in the law. Some people will be very suspicious and say that we are trying to provide a good excuse for these people to slip away home whenever they desire. It is not true, but

that idea will prevail, and therefore it is surely incumbent upon us to make it perfectly clear, not by unknown Rules, which very likely we shall not see here for a long time, but in the body of the Act, exactly what we propose and what are the conditions that we intend to enforce. One other point as regards Rules. Supposing all these matters are to be settled by Rules, what is to prevent the noble Lord, Lord Olivier, from drawing up a set of Rules which respond to his feelings and to those of the India Office at the present time? Then, in the course of time, another Secretary of State will come in, and he will have a different idea and will draw up another body of Rules. It may be said that this method will be safeguarded by laying it down that the Rules shall lie upon the Table of the House, and either that they shall become operative if nobody raises an objection, or that they shall become operative only if the definite assent of both Houses of Parliament is given to them. But in that case you are exposed to the risk that the matter may slip through unobserved—because how few of us know what is laid upon the Table!—and, in the second place, if our confirmative assent is required, you may, with changes of Secretaries of State, have opportunities, as I hinted just now, of recurrent discussion on these matters which it is profoundly undesirable to make the theme of public debate either in this country or in India. I venture, therefore, respectfully to suggest that instead of proceeding by Rules we should insert in the body of the Bill the exact conditions which we desire to enforce.

I have been, I know, rather long about this matter, but I trust that the observations I have made may have led your Lordships' House to realise that this subject is of greater importance than might otherwise be imagined, that we ought not to proceed hastily, and that the more care we devote to it now the more chance there is of having legislation which will be accepted by public opinion and be successful in practice. In conclusion, I would only add that I have no means of knowing the attitude of the Secretary of State and his advisers towards the views that I have put forward. The last thing which I would desire would be any conflict, on a matter of this sort, between the two sides of the House, or between any elements

in the House. This change, if there is to be a change, should be carried out by common consent, and I offer my own co-operation in any degree that may be required, at any future stage, to the noble Lord, the Secretary of State, with a view, before the Committee stage, of arriving at solutions which may be acceptable to both sides.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, this is already the second discussion this Session, and the third discussion in the last few years, in this House on this subject, and as I have had the misfortune to take part in all of them, I shall not venture to detain your Lordships at any great length. It is not necessary that I should follow the noble Marquess who has just sat down in all the matters of detail to which he quite rightly has called the attention of the House. Your Lordships' House has agreed generally to the principle of the Bill, and I am happy to think that on this occasion I find myself wholly in accord with what has been said by the noble Marquess. I confess that when I came to read the Bill I did it with feelings of considerable dismay, because on the last occasion when we discussed the subject we all agreed that the leave to be given to the various high officials should be subject to very careful safeguards, and I could not find in the whole of this Bill any sort or kind of safeguard. Therefore, I am glad to think that the noble Marquess has called your Lordships' attention to the matter, and has also insisted, as it seems to me rightly, that these safeguards should be made part and parcel of the measure itself.

It was Lord Banbury of Southam, I think, who called attention only yesterday to the anxiety of various Departments to substitute themselves for both Houses of Parliament—their readiness to legislate instead of allowing the two Houses of Parliament to legislate. This seems to me to be another example of the same tendency, proceeding from yet another Department. If I may say so, I think that with a Labour Government of a Socialist character in office, we should be very careful to see that the various Departments do not arrogate to themselves too much power. And I confess that another criticism which was made on the last occasion seems to have been thoroughly justified by events. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State, on

that occasion was anxious to take the Second Reading of this Bill on the very day after that on which he had taken the First Reading, at a moment when we should certainly not have had the time in which to devote to the measure that consideration which it deserves. The delay which has taken place at the request of the noble Marquess has been fully justified by the speech to which we have just listened. It has shown how many important matters there are which need consideration.

The special circumstances always introduced into a measure of this kind have naturally a tendency to become mere matters of routine. You may say that this leave is only to be given on special occasions, but unless you guard it very carefully indeed, and especially by Act of Parliament, human nature being what it is, it is almost certain to become a matter of ordinary routine for every Viceroy to take a period of leave without the existence of special circumstances. For that reason I am anxious to see in the Bill Amendments which will safeguard us in this respect.

There is one other matter to which I propose to refer. It is that I feel some little hesitation in giving to the Viceroy the power to negative any request for leave addressed to him by the Commander-in-Chief. The noble Marquess, Lord Curzon, will, I am sure, appreciate the point of my remark if I imagine the possibility of a controversy arising between the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, and the Viceroy coming home to discuss the matter with the Secretary of State. It would be in the power of the Viceroy to forbid the Commander-in-Chief to come home in order that he might place his version of the affair before the Secretary of State.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: It is the Governor-General in Council.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: Yes, but of course we all recognise the fact that there are Viceroys, or Governors-General in Council, able to impose their will upon their Council, and I regard with some hesitation the power of veto given by the Bill to the Governor in Council to prevent the Commander-in-Chief from coming home and putting his side of the controversy before the Secretary of State.

There is one other question which I will venture to address to the noble Lord, the Secretary of State, and it is in regard to the Executive Council. I understand that at the present moment the Members of the Executive Council have power to come home, and therefore I am not quite clear why it is necessary to introduce this particular provision. I venture to hope that the criticisms which have been made may appeal to the Secretary of State and that he may see his way, when we come to the Committee stage, to move Amendments which will meet the various objections that have been raised in the course of this Second Reading discussion.

LORD SOUTHBOROUGH: My Lords, I desire to put an administrative point arising from this Bill before your Lordships, and it is in no way a criticism of the Bill itself. I observe that in the Bill the appointment of the Acting Governor is to be made by Warrant under the Royal Sign Manual. Your Lordships are, no doubt, aware that if that course is adopted there will be a difference in principle between the method of appointment as regards India, on the one hand, and as regard the Dominions and the Crown Colonies, on the other. It is possible that that must be so, but it appears to me that before going into Committee on the Bill your Lordships ought to be aware of the fact.

The Dominion and Crown Colony practice is this: The dormant Commission, as it is called, which controls the appointment of the Acting Governor, contains in most cases the names of offices and not of persons; that is, in the dormant Commission, which is the creature of the Letters Patent, appointing the Governor, there is a provision which says that where the Governor takes leave and his place is filled during his temporary absence it shall be filled by the holder of an office—it may be the Chief Justice, or it may be the officer commanding the troops, or the Lieutenant-Governor, if there is such a person in the Dominion or Colony. The effect of that procedure is, that from the time when the Governor

takes office it has been decided in writing—namely, in the Letters Patent—who is really going to represent the Governor when he goes on leave. It is true that in some cases the Letters Patent contain, not the name of the office which is to produce the Lieutenant-Governor, but a name itself; some person is named in the Letters Patent. The disadvantage of that course is that, as time goes on, the person named in the document may have retired, or he may be dead. But, in any event, the practice adopted as regards the Dominions and the Crown Colonies ensures that, from the start, everybody knows who is going to succeed the Governor when he goes on leave.

There will be no difficulty at all with regard to the Governor-General in India, because it will be settled as a matter of course. He will be succeeded, no doubt, by the senior Governor, or by the Commander-in-Chief. But in the Provinces I can see some difficulty in making an *ad hoc* appointment at the moment when the leave is given. It will be an invidious task in many cases. I can well understand that when the Governor of a Province has applied for leave there may be at the head of the Provincial Government a British official, a distinguished man, but a man whom, for various reasons, perhaps personal, the Secretary of State would not desire to put temporarily into the seat of Government. Or it may be that the head of the Government at the moment is a distinguished Indian—a gentleman prominent in every way, but holding opinions upon Indian affairs which, at such a time as this, would make him unacceptable on political grounds to the Secretary of State. I am afraid that if the appointments are made *ad hoc*, instead of being made in advance, at the time of the appointment of the Governors, it may give cause for a great deal of personal jealousy, and also for political criticism.

Perhaps I am laying too much stress upon experience of the Dominions and Crown Colonies, but I point out to your Lordships and to my noble friend the Secretary of State for India, who is very familiar with the procedure on the other side of the Empire, that this point ought to be considered—namely, whether the person who is to succeed in each Government as temporary Governor

should be settled at the time when the Governor is appointed, or whether it should be left to the time when leave is granted.

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, I am most indebted to the noble Marquess opposite and to my noble friend Lord Southborough for the observations they have made upon the Bill. One principal point has been raised throughout the whole of the discussion—namely, whether we should fill up this Bill with details, which we should establish by legislation, or whether we should leave those details to the Rules. Being an old Colonial servant, and also an old civil servant, I asked myself why matters which, in regard to the British Civil Service and in regard to the Colonial Service are not dealt with by Acts of Parliament, but are dealt with by rescripts of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, or by Royal instructions, or Letters Patent, should, in regard to the Government of India, be dealt with by a Bill at a time when we are rather tending to advance towards the recognition that the Government of India has a certain claim towards autonomy under the guidance of the Secretary of State. Why should we fill up the Bill with provisions of that sort—provisions with regard to the length of time for which leave should be granted, the allowances to be granted on leave, and so on, all of which matters under the Colonial Office are settled by the Secretary of State, or by the Treasury?

I quite admit that the habit of legislation by Order in Council, or by Rules, is a vice of all public Departments. They think that it is better that Parliament should give them large powers to do these things by Rules which may be laid quietly on the Table of the House. It is more convenient, because, if you want to alter your Rules, you can do so when good reason is shown for altering them, whereas it is inconvenient to be continually altering your Act of Parliament. With regard to some matters, for example, the restriction as to the number of times of absence, or the length of the period of absence, I am quite willing that those should be put into the Bill, if the noble Marquess presses it; but, really, is it necessary as a matter of principle that the question of salaries, and so on, should be put into a Bill of this sort?

Lord Southborough.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: You put it in yourself.

LORD OLIVIER: Yes, but you also wanted to have put in the provision for the salary of the officer going on leave.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: It has been in all the previous Bills. It was in the Bills of 1891 and 1892, and none of the suspicions of the noble Lord were raised at that time, or shared by anybody.

LORD OLIVIER: This is a survival from those Bills. One of the points to which attention was called was that the grounds for which leave should be granted should be put into the Bill, and, with regard to those grounds, I am in agreement with the noble Marquess that the grounds should be either reasons of public interest, or ill health, or private affairs. Those are the conditions under which leave of absence is granted to Governors in Colonies; and I agree that all those three grounds should apply to a Governor-General, but only the two latter—urgent reasons of ill health or of private affairs—should apply to other officials. Those principles, I think, we may well agree to, and I should be willing to put that restriction into the Bill. As regards the other questions, as to what should go into the Bill or should not, I should be very glad to accept the offer of the noble Marquess to confer on the points which he thinks it essential, with his great experience, should go into the Bill.

The noble Earl, Lord Beauchamp, asked why Executive Councillors are put into the Bill. As a matter of fact the conditions under which leave can be granted to Executive Councillors are, I understand, at the present time rather restricted. They can only be granted leave on special duty, that is, when they come home in the execution of their duty, or on sick leave. This would place the privilege of granting leave to Executive Councillors on the same lines as those which it is suggested should apply to the grant of leave to Governors and Lieutenant-Governors; that is to say, that they might be allowed to come home on the ground of urgent private affairs.

With regard to the point raised by the noble Lord, Lord Southborough, that under the system of Colonial government the acting officer is provided for either by Letters Patent or by the dormant Com-

mission, that has not been adopted in this Bill because, after correspondence with the Viceroy, the Viceroy certainly preferred that the system of acting appointments should not be automatic, but that acting appointments should be made, as he specially desires, after consultation with the Governor-General. In order to enable an acting appointment to be made after consultation with the Governor-General so that his opinion might be taken as to the suitable way of filling a vacancy, we propose to put into the instructions that the Secretary of State shall approve the appointment after receiving a recommendation from the Governor-General. That is deliberately done in view of what is considered, in the circumstances, to be more suitable to India. As we know, in the Colonies sometimes the automatic operation of Letters Patent naming an office has been superseded by issuing special dormant Commissions in certain circumstances. The Governor-General is perfectly qualified to advise the Secretary of State and would not exercise the power arbitrarily or injudiciously, and that does give him the prestige and responsibility of making a recommendation, which he will do, and which the Secretary of State, almost invariably of course, would accept.

I have spoken generally, as the criticisms of the noble Marquess were general, as to the principle of putting these things into the Bill. I gather that he wishes to put as much into the Bill, and to put it as precisely, as possible. In accordance with his offer to confer with me upon the Amendments which I propose and which I gather he would like to propose, I should very much like to pursue that course, and at the present moment not to give notice of any specific date for the Committee Stage.

On Question, Bill read 2^o, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE.

VISCOUNT PEEL: My Lords, I desire to ask His Majesty's Government to state the terms of reference of the Committee recently appointed in India to examine into the working of the Constitution.

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, I have not been informed of the precise terms of reference given to the Committee with

regard to which the noble Viscount inquires; but I have no doubt that they will direct the Committee to address themselves to the purposes clearly stated in Sir Malcolm Hailey's speeches in the Legislative Assembly on February 8 and February 18 last, from which I may quote the following words:—

“ We propose to make a serious attempt to investigate justifiable complaints against the working of the Government of India Act in practice; to assess causes and to examine the remedies necessary.”

I am informed by the Viceroy that the Committee, as so far constituted, consists of three members of the Governor-General's Executive Council, and three Secretaries to the Government of India, that at the present stage the Committee is engaged in examining the legal and constitutional questions involved—spade work which must of necessity be undertaken in the first instance in order to determine the potentialities of the situation. That is all the information I am able at the moment to give to the noble Viscount.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I do not know whether I may, with the leave of your Lordships, ask the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, whether he would have any objection to obtaining from the Government of India the precise terms of reference under which the Committee is working.

LORD OLIVIER: I will certainly do as the noble Viscount wishes.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I am very much obliged to the noble Lord.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 13th May, 1924.

BOMBAY, BARODA AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL. [H.L.]

Returned from the Commons, agreed to.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

House to be in Committee on Tuesday next.

Lord Olivier.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 15th May, 1924.

ROYAL COMMISSION..

The Royal Assent was given to the following Bill:

Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 20th May, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

Moved, That the House do now resolve itself into Committee.—(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House in Committee accordingly:

[The EARL OF DONOUGHMORE in the Chair.]

Clause 1:

Amendment of ss. 86 and 87 of the Government of India Act.

1.—(1) For Sections eighty-six and eighty-seven of the Government of India Act there shall be substituted the following sections:

Power to grant leave of absence to Governor-General, etc.

86.—(1) Subject to such conditions and limitations as may be prescribed by rules made under Section ninety-four of this Act, the Secretary of State in Council may grant to the Governor-General, and on the application of the Governor-General in Council may grant to the Commander-in-Chief and a Governor, leave of absence for such period, not exceeding the period allowed by such rules, as he may think fit.

(2) Subject as aforesaid, the Governor-General in Council may grant to any members of his executive council, other than the Commander-in-Chief, and a Governor in Council and a Lieutenant-Governor in Council may grant to any member of his executive council, leave of absence for such period, not exceeding the period allowed by such rules, as he may think fit.

(3) Where the Governor-General, or the Commander-in-Chief, or a governor or a member of an executive council obtains leave of absence in pursuance of this section, he shall retain his office during his absence, but if his absence exceeds the period for which leave is granted his office shall become vacant.

Acting appointments during the absence of the Governor-General, etc., on leave.

87.—(1) Where leave is granted in pursuance of the foregoing section to the Governor-General, or to the Commander-in-Chief, or to a Governor, a person shall be appointed in his place during his absence, and the appointment shall be made by His Majesty by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual. The person so appointed during the absence of the Commander-in-Chief may, if the Commander-in-Chief was a member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General, be also appointed by the Governor-General in Council to be a temporary member of that Council.

(2) The person so appointed shall, until the return to duty of the permanent holder of the office, or, if he does not return, until a successor arrives, hold and execute the office to which he has been appointed and shall have and may exercise all the rights and powers thereof and shall be entitled to receive the emoluments and advantages appertaining to the office, forgoing the emoluments and advantages (if any) to which he was entitled at the time of his being appointed to that office.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER) had on the Paper an Amendment, to omit from subsection (1) the substituted Section 86 and to insert:

Power to grant leave of absence to Governor-General, etc.

“86.—(1) The Secretary of State in Council may grant to the Governor-General and, on the recommendation of the Governor-General in Council, to the Commander-in-Chief, leave of absence for urgent reasons of public interest, or of health or of private affairs.

(2) The Secretary of State in Council may, on the recommendation of the Governor-General in Council, grant to a Governor, and the Governor-General in Council, or a Governor in Council or a Lieutenant-Governor in Council, as the case may be, may grant to any member of his Executive Council (other than the Commander-in-Chief) leave of absence for urgent reasons of health or of private affairs.

(3) Leave of absence shall not be granted to any person in pursuance of this section for any period exceeding four months nor more than once during his tenure of office:

Provided that the Secretary of State in Council may if he thinks fit extend any period of leave so granted beyond four months, but shall in every case publish his reasons for so doing.

(4) Where leave of absence is granted to any person in pursuance of this section he shall retain his office during the period of leave as originally granted, or, if that period is extended by the Secretary of State in Council, during the period as so extended, but if his absence exceeds that period his

office shall be deemed to have become vacant as from the commencement of his absence.

(5) Where a person obtains leave of absence in pursuance of this section he shall be entitled to receive during his absence such leave-allowances as may be prescribed by rules made by the Secretary of State in Council, but, if he does not resume his duties upon the termination of the period of the leave, he shall repay, in such manner as may be so prescribed as aforesaid, any leave-allowance received under this subsection.

(6) If the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief is granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest, the Secretary of State in Council may, in addition to the leave-allowances to which he is entitled under this section, grant to him such further allowances in respect of travelling expenses as the Secretary of State in Council may think fit.

(7) Rules made under this section shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made.”

The noble Lord said: My Lords, when this Bill was under discussion on the Second Reading a difference of opinion arose between my noble friends on the other side and myself as to the precise form in which the provisions, the purpose and substance of which were generally approved, should be put into the Bill. We proposed to legislate giving power for Rules to be made for leave of absence and for pay. It was contended by noble Lords opposite that it was preferable that all the provisions regulating leave of absence and emolument should be embodied in the Bill. Having been an officer in His Majesty's Service, I rather took exception to the principle of the objection. I think there is a distinction that should be borne in mind.

The noble Marquess and other noble Lords supporting him justly observed that we had got into a very bad habit of enabling Orders in Council to be made for all sorts of matters for which legislation might properly be passed. Orders in Council and Executive Orders dealing with the liberties of the subject are one thing; but Orders and Rules dealing with His Majesty's servants who are servants of the King by title are somewhat different, and, as I pointed out, it has been the habit for the Rules of the public service, whether in the Colonies or in this country, to be made by means of Orders in Council or by Rules of the Secretary of State or the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, and if Parliament disapproves of them it shows that disapproval in certain well known ways.

But it has not been usual to insert in Acts of Parliament minute provisions and Rules for the leave of absence and pay of those engaged in the public service.

I admit that the position of the Government of India may, perhaps, be regarded as somewhat different. As a matter of fact, the powers of the Governor-General to take leave are at present absolutely directed by law and leave cannot be granted except by law. Similarly, there are other provisions affecting the substance of this Bill which are at present governed by the Government of India Act. In consultation with the noble Marquess, Lord Curzon, and with my noble predecessor, Lord Peel, I have gone through the provisions of the Act and have redrafted them in the fresh form for Clause 1 which I understand meets the views of the noble Marquess and the noble Viscount. We propose now to substitute an entirely new clause for Clause 1 of the Bill.

The first subsection of the proposed clause provides that the Secretary of State in Council may grant to the Governor-General and, on the recommendation of the Governor-General in Council, to the Commander-in-Chief, leave of absence for urgent reasons of public interest, or of health or of private affairs. Those are the three categories suggested by the noble Marquess and which, I entirely agree with him, are the three categories under which leave of absence would probably be granted. We want to put this provision into the Bill and not into Rules.

The second subsection provides that—

“The Secretary of State in Council may, on the recommendation of the Governor-General in Council, grant to a Governor, and the Governor-General in Council, or a Governor in Council or a Lieutenant-Governor in Council, as the case may be”—

there are, at present, no Lieutenant-Governors, but the Act provides for their appointment in certain circumstances and we have to take the necessary powers—

“may grant to any member of his Executive Council (other than the Commander-in-Chief) leave of absence for urgent reasons of health or of private affairs.”

That is to say, we do not allow these subordinate Governors and Executive Councillors to be granted leave for the purpose of consultation with the Secretary of State. That privilege is only to

Lord Olivier.

be granted to the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief.

Then, in subsection (3), we limit the period during which leave of absence shall be granted to that suggested by the noble Marquess. The subsection provides that leave of absence shall not be granted to any person in pursuance of the section for any period exceeding four months nor more than once during his tenure of office. Upon that I want to make one observation. At the present time Governors may grant to Executive Councillors leave of absence on medical certificate for a period not exceeding six months. Therefore, by limiting the grant of leave of absence that may be given to all these officers to four months, one might appear to be encroaching upon the privilege which is now granted to Executive Councillors. That I do not think is an objection of substance, because the privilege they enjoy is one subject to the control of the Governor and Secretary of State, and I think it may be clearly understood that the Secretary of State would, if any Executive Councillor came on leave of absence on the ground of ill-health for four months, reasonably take into consideration all the circumstances, and, if his health required it, would grant him that further extension of two months which might originally have been granted under the discretion of the Governor before he left India. Therefore we are not really encroaching upon any privilege which Executive Councillors at present enjoy with regard to their health.

I wish slightly to vary the next sentence that is printed on the Amendment Paper so that it will read as follows:

“Provided that the Secretary of State in Council may, if he thinks fit, extend any period of leave so granted, but in any such case the reasons for the extension shall be set forth in a Minute signed by the Secretary of State and laid before both Houses of Parliament.”

Publication was also asked for, and as a form is already provided in another section of the Government of India Act, we thought it would be reasonable to follow the particular form of publication already embodied in that Act. Therefore we have adopted that form rather than the more general word “published.”

On the other subsections of the clause I do not think I need make any observations. They have been set out in the

Amendments, and, subject to the alteration which I have handed to the Lord Chairman, I beg leave to move the new clause.

Amendment moved—

Clause 1, page 1, line 8, leave out from the end of line 8 to the end of line 7 on page 2 and insert:—

Power to grant leave of absence to Governor-General, etc.

(" 86.—(1) The Secretary of State in Council may grant to the Governor-General and, on the recommendation of the Governor-General in Council, to the Commander-in-Chief, leave of absence for urgent reasons of public interest, or of health or of private affairs.

(2) The Secretary of State in Council may, on the recommendation of the Governor-General in Council, grant to a Governor, and the Governor-General in Council, or a Governor in Council or a Lieutenant-Governor in Council, as the case may be, may grant to any member of his Executive Council (other than the Commander-in-Chief) leave of absence for urgent reasons of health or of private affairs.

(3) Leave of absence shall not be granted to any person in pursuance of this section for any period exceeding four months nor more than once during his tenure of office:

Provided that the Secretary of State in Council may if he thinks fit extend any period of leave so granted, but in any such case the reasons for the extension shall be set forth in a Minute signed by the Secretary of State and laid before both Houses of Parliament.

(4) Where leave of absence is granted to any person in pursuance of this section he shall retain his office during the period of leave as originally granted, or, if that period is extended by the Secretary of State in Council, during the period as so extended, but if his absence exceeds that period his office shall be deemed to have become vacant as from the commencement of his absence.

(5) Where a person obtains leave of absence in pursuance of this section he shall be entitled to receive during his absence such leave-allowances as may be prescribed by rules made by the Secretary of State in Council, but, if he does not resume his duties upon the termination of the period of the leave, he shall repay, in such manner as may be so prescribed as aforesaid, any leave-allowances received under this subsection.

(6) If the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief is granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest, the Secretary of State in Council may, in addition to the leave-allowances to which he is entitled under this section, grant to him such further allowances in respect of travelling expenses as the Secretary of State in Council may think fit.

(7) Rules made under this section shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made.")—
(Lord Olivier.)

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, those of your Lordships who were present when we discussed this question on Second Reading will remember that several of us on this side of the House, and some noble Lords of the Liberal Party, directed certain criticisms at the Bill in the form in which it had been introduced by the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India. We have been ourselves, on this side of the House, in general agreement in those criticisms, and at the close of our proceedings, feeling it most desirable that the House should act as far as possible with unanimity in the matter, and that there should be no conflict of opinion between the two sides of the House, I suggested to the noble Lord that he might allow me, as representing those who sit here, to enter into private consultation with him as to the form which Amendments to the Bill as originally proposed might properly take. He was good enough to accede to that wish. As he told your Lordships just now, we have had more than one meeting since, with the result that this rather considerable change in the Bill is now proposed, with full Government responsibility, by him.

I think it is really a little more than he was inclined just now to suggest. He seemed almost to imply that the change was only one of form, and that he would have preferred to deal with the matter in one way, while we, on the other hand, on this side, were more anxious that it should be dealt with in another way. I think it is a little more than that, because now under this Amendment you do get clearly stated in the Bill exactly what you propose to do in each case, the reasons for which you act in each case, the conditions under which leave may be given, and the restrictions under which it ought to be given. That surely is a very much better plan than trusting to those Rules for which the noble Lord has just expressed a sort of academic preference. I am much obliged to him for the courtesy and consideration he has shown in the matter. I think the Amendments which he has just explained and defended really meet every point that we raised two or three weeks ago. I need only, therefore, comment upon one or two.

The first subsection of the new clause which he has read gives, as we urged on the previous occasion, leave of absence, subject to the discretion of the Secretary

of State in Council, both to the Governor-General and to the Commander-in-Chief. I think that is right, because I can conceive conditions (indeed I indicated some the other day) in which both of those high officials might—not of course at the same time, but independently—in the course of their term of office be required to come home in order to consult with the Secretary of State here. Let me add now, what I did not say then, that I can well conceive a case in support of my general proposition in which the Governor-General, reluctant himself to take his hand from the plough even for a period of three or four months, might at the same time think it desirable to depute his most important councillor—namely, the Commander-in-Chief—to represent views on his behalf, which no one could do with so much authority, to the Secretary of State at home. That, I think, apart from the justification which I indicated the other day, is a reason for giving this privilege to the Commander-in-Chief as well as to the Viceroy.

The noble Lord has been good enough to accept the suggestion which was made from this side the other day, that leave of absence granted under the new provisions should be limited to four months, but he mentioned one reservation, and I think rightly mentioned it. He pointed out that under the existing law members of the Executive Councils in India can, upon the production of a medical certificate, obtain leave of absence during their tenure of office to this country for a period not of four months, but of six months, and he said that we are extending an advantage to those persons which they have never hitherto enjoyed—because we are going in future to let them come home for urgent reasons of private affairs as well as of health, a prerogative they have not hitherto possessed. Therefore, he said we are not only not doing them any injury, but, on the contrary, we are conferring upon them an advantage. At the same time he said we do not want to take away from anybody the statutory privilege which he at present enjoys.

I think there is force in that, but what he did not make quite clear was this—and I ask him if my interpretation is correct. This privilege, which he says depends upon an understanding, will I gather under the new Act apply to those persons who at present enjoy it—that is

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.

to say the members of Executive Councils—in the future. But they are far more numerous than they were in my day, when there were only three Governments, the Governments of India, Bombay and Madras. The members of all these Executive Councils in future are not, as I understand it, going to be put in the exceptional position of having their six months while everybody else has four months. All the noble Lord means is that those who already under the existing law can take advantage of the six months' privilege will not be deprived of it. Perhaps before we conclude he will tell me if I am right in my interpretation of what he has just said.

Then he has introduced in the second part of subsection (3) a condition which, I think, is justified. He proposes that the power of extending the period of leave beyond three months shall be vested in the Secretary of State in Council. I think that is reasonable, not because I anticipate extension will be asked for or given in cases of urgent private affairs, or even in cases of consultation with the Government, but because a case might very well arise in which a man came over under the terms of this Act for reasons of health and the cure which he was going to take in this country might not have been accomplished at the end of four months. It would be only reasonable in such a case to give a certain power of extension to the Secretary of State in Council. That power the noble Lord proposes to take, and in the statement he has just made he proposes to vary the Amendment as it is on the Paper and to substitute for the words "shall in every case publish his reasons for so doing," a formula which he says is much more common and regular—namely, that he shall lay upon the Table of the House a statement of the reasons which have decided him in Council in giving the extension suggested. I have no objection to offer to that proposal, and indeed when I asked for publicity the other day I contemplated something of the sort. The Secretary of State in Council is not the least likely to abuse the privilege which he enjoys under the proposed legislation, but it is only right that Parliament and the public should have an opportunity of knowing the reasons for which on this or that occasion it may be departed from.

Those are the only points to which I need call attention in the substituted

section which the noble Lord has proposed, and subject to anything which may be said in any other quarter of the House, I think your Lordships may accept the Amendment in the conviction that the Bill is a better one than in the form in which it was originally introduced.

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, the noble Marquess has raised one point on which he thinks I should make a further explanation. It is with reference to the power of granting six months' leave to Executive Councillors. As I pointed out this is not a legal right on the part of Executive Councillors, but the Governor-General may grant them six months' leave on a medical certificate. I thought it would be sufficient for us to limit the grant by the Governor to four months and to state publicly that their rights were not impaired because the Secretary of State still has the power to grant them a further extension which is not limited to six months. It may exceed six months.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: The noble Lord has not quite answered my question. Here is a privilege which has hitherto been enjoyed by certain persons and the noble Lord says, in effect, and not improperly: "I do not want to take away from these people the advantage which they at present enjoy, although we are giving them something in addition." My question was: Will the people who enjoy this privilege in the future be only those who have enjoyed it in the past, or will it be enjoyed by all members of Executive Councils at all times in the future? That is giving them an additional privilege. It is not only giving them the privilege of coming home for six months or four months on urgent private affairs, but an opportunity which no one else is to enjoy of coming home on a medical certificate for six months instead of four.

LORD OLIVIER: I do not think we need make any discrimination, because all that the Governor-General can grant Executive Councillors is four months' leave of absence.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: That is clear, then?

LORD OLIVIER: That is perfectly clear. All they can get from the

Governor-General is four months' leave of absence. If Executive Councillors come home they will have a presumptive claim for special compassion from the Secretary of State because they can say: "If you had not passed this law I should have got six months."

LORD RAGLAN: The Commander-in-Chief in India is a Regular Officer and it is difficult to see, why, when he is on leave, he should be treated as regards his pay differently from any other Regular Officer.

LORD OLIVIER: I am afraid that is a conundrum which we shall have to thrash out with the War Office. We can make Rules with regard to his pay, but we have not yet made those Rules.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD OLIVIER: The Amendment in substituted Section 57 (1), after the first "appointed" to insert "to act," is consequential.

Amendment moved—

Clause 1, page 2, line 11, after ("appointed") insert ("to act").—(Lord Olivier.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD OLIVIER: The last Amendment to Clause 1 is also consequential.

Amendment moved—

Clause 1, page 2, line 30, at end insert: (" (3) When during the absence on leave of the Governor-General a Governor is appointed to act in his place, the provisions of this section relating to the appointment of a person to act in the place of a Governor to whom leave of absence has been granted in pursuance of the foregoing section shall apply in the same manner as if leave of absence had been so granted to the Governor.")—(Lord Olivier.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2.

Amendment of s. 92 of Government of India Act.

2. For subsection (4) of Section ninety-two of the Government of India Act there shall be substituted the following subsections:—

(4) Until the return to duty of the member so incapable or absent, the person temporarily appointed shall hold and execute the office to which he has been appointed, and shall have and may exercise all the rights and powers thereof, and shall be entitled to receive the emoluments and advantages appertaining to the office, forgoing the emoluments and advantages (if any) to

which he was entitled at the time of his being appointed to that office.

(4A) When a member of an Executive Council is by infirmity or otherwise rendered incapable of acting or attending to act as such and a temporary member of council is appointed in his place, the absent member shall on resumption of his duty be entitled to receive half his salary for the period of his absence.

LORD OLIVIER: The Amendment to Clause 2 is purely drafting.

Amendment moved—

Clause 2, page 3, line 5, leave out ("on resumption of his duty").—(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining Clauses agreed to.

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, I beg to move the Motion which appears on the Paper in my name.

Moved, That the Lord MacDonnell be discharged from serving on the Standing Joint Committee, and that the Lord Willingdon be named of the Committee in his place.—(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 21st May, 1924.

EMPIRE WIRELESS FACILITIES.

LORD LAWRENCE: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government if they will lay on the Table the correspondence which has passed between them and the Dominions and India in regard to the provision of improved Empire wireless telegraphic facilities?

LORD MUIR MACKENZIE: My Lords, the answer with which I have been furnished from the Post Office is as follows. The Government fully recognise the importance of improving the facilities for wireless telegraphic communication, and since the present Government came into office a Commission has been appointed of an advisory character who have presented a Report. The Report of this Committee has been published, and those of your Lordships who are interested in the subject have probably seen it. The recommendations made in that Report

have been communicated to the Dominions and correspondence with them is still proceeding. His Majesty's Government do not think it desirable at the present stage to lay the correspondence on the Table, but a statement upon the subject will presently be made and the question as to whether Papers should be laid can be dealt with at that time. It will be borne in mind that in any event the correspondence with the Dominions can only be published with the assent of the various Governments concerned.

AIRSHIP POLICY.

For references to India during the Debate, see Index.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 22nd May, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

Amendments reported (according to Order).

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

A message ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to propose that the Standing Joint Committee do meet in Committee Room A on Tuesday next at half-past twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 27th May, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

Read 3^a (according to Order); Privilege Amendments made. Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

STANDING JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Message from the Commons that they have ordered that the Select Committee appointed by them to join with the Select Committee appointed by this House on Indian Affairs, do meet the Lords

Committee in Committee Room A this day, at half-past twelve o'clock, as proposed by their Lordships.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 3rd June, 1924.

LORD OLIVIER'S LETTER TO MR. SATYAMURTI.

VISCOUNT PEEL had the following Notice on the Paper:—

To call the attention of His Majesty's Government to the letter written by the Secretary of State for India to Mr. Satyamurti, member of the Madras Legislative Council, and particularly to the statement contained in that letter that the maintenance of the communal system is antagonistic to the possibility of any proper working of democratic institutions in India; and to move for Papers.

The noble Viscount said: My Lords, I desire to call the attention of your Lordships, and of His Majesty's Government, to a letter written by the Secretary of State for India to Mr. Satyamurti, and I think I ought to read the letter, which is quite short, before I comment upon it. It runs thus:

"I have been glad to receive your letter, and am strongly disposed to share your confidence that closer contact with the Swaraj Party is very desirable. I am interested to receive your observations on the working of the diarchy in Madras, and your project for forming a non-communal Party. I rather gather from the debates in the Council that this was already the platform the Swarajists desired. It certainly seems to me that the maintenance of the communal system is antagonistic to the possibility of any proper working of democratic institutions in India."

I do not know why Mr. Satyamurti was selected by the Secretary of State as the recipient of this important missive. As far as I have been able to discover the past and the political predilections of this gentleman, he is a member of the Legislative Council of Madras, and is well-known as a non-co-operator and as a strong supporter of the Swaraj movement.

I may say at once that this letter which was addressed by the Secretary of State was not authorised by him to be published, and that, I think, is one of the unfortunate aspects of this incident;

because when a private letter is published it gives people the impression that you are really getting at the inner mind of the individual who has so published it. When we express ourselves in public documents or in Despatches, we naturally make use of that dignified solemnity and occasional obscurity of language which is sometimes necessary in that class of communication. But in private letters we express ourselves with the directness and familiarity which is permitted in those documents. Although this letter, I agree, ought not to have been published, we have to deal with the facts of the case as they are and the effects which that letter may have had.

It is common knowledge that this question of communal representation—that is to say, of representation by religious communities—is, and has long been, a very burning and controversial one in India. It is well known that the abolition of this communal system is the aspiration, and the very natural aspiration, of a large body of Hindu politicians, for the very simple reason that, if that were done, they would get far larger representation in the Assembly and in the Councils, and would have far more political control. I do not know whether this consideration appealed to the mind of the Secretary of State when he addressed the letter to this gentleman. What did he suppose? Did he suppose that this gentleman was going to go about for the rest of his life, all on fire with information which he is bound to suppress, and burdened with a secret which, if delivered to the public, must, of course, give him a natural precedence among his political fellows? The Secretary of State has had a long career. He has had great experience in the Civil Service. He has been a Colonial Governor, and, I believe, head of another great political Department, and I think it argues very well for that simplicity of mind which he has been able to maintain through all the changes of political and official life that he still, no doubt, considered that a politician would not do violence to his own intimate private feelings, and consider that in the public interest he must publish a matter of public import.

I wish to examine this matter from one or two different aspects. What, I ask, is, and what must be, the position of the Viceroy and his Government in face of

communications of this kind? Constantly communications, public and private, important and intimate, are passing between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, and it is of the highest importance for the good government of India that there should be complete and absolute confidence existing between those two great officials. What must be the opinion or the feelings of a Viceroy—and his position is difficult enough in all conscience in these days—when he does not know, or may feel that he cannot know from moment to moment, what other communications on important subjects are passing, not through the recognised channels of correspondence but through politicians—not even officials—selected at will, I suppose, from prominent Swarajists or non-co-operators in various parts of India? His nervousness is bound to be increased, because, even if these declarations or letters are upon the same subjects as those which have been dealt with in correspondence between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, you may have different versions, differently expressed, of the same policy, and these versions, I can assure your Lordships, are carefully compared, collated, and contrasted by some of the most ingenious minds that you have in the world, by lawyers of great acuteness, by persons who may be said to be the lineal descendants of the old commentators on the Upanishads. They are most skilled in all the intricacies of language, and the danger of communications of this kind is that different inferences will be drawn by these gentlemen as to the policies guiding the minds of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State.

The remarkable thing is that the Secretary of State himself has drawn attention to the danger of any looseness of language. He commented not long ago in your Lordships' House with great severity upon a statement made by Mr. Lloyd George when he was Prime Minister in a well-known speech known as the "steel frame speech." The intention of that speech was perfectly clear. It was intended to give fresh heart to the Services, which were suffering from the situation in which they found themselves, very largely as the result of the new reforms. But he used one loose expression from which at once arose a flood of deduction, of speculation, and of inference, which seemed to suggest that the Prime Minister was going to go back

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on the declarations of 1917, and the Act of 1919, that the reforms were to be stayed, and that the word of Great Britain was to be imperilled. You may say that these are large buildings to erect either upon a phrase or upon a letter, but that is a characteristic of many of these Indian politicians, and you have to deal with them, indeed, as you find them. And there is no soil in which these seeds of suspicion can grow more rapidly than in the rather heated and inflammable soil of Indian politics.

Perhaps I do some injustice to the noble Lord, because, after all, he is only following the example that has been set him by so many of his colleagues in the Labour Government. It has been one of the marked characteristics of this Government that they seem to have a singular aversion from making their first statement on important subjects within the walls either of another place or of this House. There are many instances in which they have thus spread the light of their countenance, and in which the first beams of some new project has appeared in a newspaper, either in America or elsewhere. Their international sympathies, I suppose, require some degree of international propaganda. Anyhow, it is, I think, the greatest contribution of the Labour Government—their main contribution in fact—towards constitutional innovation.

Now let me ask what is the exact interpretation of the words of the Secretary of State. First of all, I would observe that in the first portion of the letter he was "strongly disposed to share your confidence that closer contact with the Swaraj Party is very desirable." On that I have only to make one observation—that if it is thought wise that there should be any *rapprochement* in this connection with the leaders of any Party in India it is far better left to the Viceroy and to his advisers there. After all, they are on the spot and they know the whole situation in a way that the Secretary of State cannot know it. Moreover, they know the individuals there who are to be trusted and those who are not to be trusted.

The latter part of the statement to which I attach more importance—that as to the communal system—is, I think, capable of more than one interpretation. It may,

for instance, suggest that communal representation is necessary; that this is incompatible with democratic government, and that until the deep-seated and deep-rooted differences on which communal representation is founded are reconciled, the democratic aspirations of Indian politicians must remain unsatisfied. If it mean that, it is apparently a mild, philosophic rebuke administered by the Secretary of State to Mr. Satyamurti. But, after carefully investigating the evidence, I cannot help coming to the conclusion that this is not the right gloss or interpretation to be placed upon this particular document. You have to regard the general views and sympathies of the Party with which the noble Lord is associated, and looking at those associations and sympathies, I think the simplest interpretation (and in textual criticism it is said, I believe, that the simplest explanation is generally the best) is that communal representation is an obstacle to self-government, and that it ought, therefore, to be removed. I remember examining at the General Election many of the Labour declarations and Election addresses with a view to deciding what their policy was. They were certainly based upon the most colossal ignorance of the situation, and their ignorance was only equalled by their colossal self-confidence. But they were all in the same direction—a general feeling that immediate self-government should be granted to India. Therefore, that inclines me to this latter interpretation.

Let me say this only about their speeches. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day how valuable a thing it would be if all their pre-Election speeches were to be burned. I am certainly inclined to echo that sentiment. Unfortunately, whatever you may do in this country, there can be no purification by fire of this kind in India. These observations, thrown out casually and carelessly very often, are treasured and made note of in the retentive memory of the Indian politician.

I understand from a letter or statement that I think was published by the noble Lord that he has more than one explanation. It is always useful to have more than one explanation of any particular course one has taken. He says that this is a mere speculation; it is not a de-

claration of policy. I submit to your Lordships that the mere speculations of the Secretary of State for India ring and reverberate throughout India and that on this matter, though individual Secretaries of State may have their own opinions, if they differ in any sense from the political and public opinions that they are putting forward, for Heaven's sake let them bury them in the remotest safe that they possess in their chambers. Another statement by the noble Lord was that he was only repeating some statement that he had already made to your Lordships on another occasion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): What is the noble Viscount quoting from? He referred in the previous sentence to something I said. He is now talking of something else that I said, and I want to know where it comes from.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I was quoting from a statement which was stated to have been received from the noble Lord and published in the *Daily Telegraph*.

LORD OLIVIER: I cannot imagine what the noble Lord is referring to. If he will tell me I shall be very glad.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I will read the exact statement. It was a statement published, I think, in the *Daily Telegraph*, and it learns—

LORD OLIVIER: Will the noble Viscount read precisely what it is he is quoting? Will he read the whole statement? I do not know what he is referring to.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I am referring, first of all, to the defences that may be put forward by the noble Lord.

LORD OLIVIER: To the defences that may be put forward?

VISCOUNT PEEL: Yes.

LORD OLIVIER: I am obliged to the noble Viscount.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I referred, of course, to a statement that was published in the *Daily Telegraph*, which I presume—if I am wrong, of course, I withdraw it—was issued by the noble Lord, and in any case it is said to be the same as the statement already made in your Lordships' House.

LORD OLIVIER: That is a statement which appears, I believe, as "learned" by *Reuter*.

VISCOUNT PEEL: If the noble Lord has nothing to do with it I will not put it forward as his own.

LORD OLIVIER: I had nothing to do with that statement; although I do not repudiate it.

VISCOUNT PEEL: Then may I put it in this way—that it is possible that the noble Lord may contend that this statement has already been made, or words very similar to it uttered, in your Lordships' House? I put it in that form, and the noble Lord does not object to that statement?

LORD OLIVIER: To what statement?

VISCOUNT PEEL: To the statement I have just made. I say that it is quite possible that the noble Lord may contend that the statement contained in the letter has been already made in the same or in another form before your Lordships' House.

LORD OLIVIER: I take no objection to that.

VISCOUNT PEEL: The noble Lord takes no objection to that, and I am much obliged to the noble Lord, because I have examined rather carefully and read through the very long statement he made in your Lordships' House in February last, and I cannot see there any statement similar to the one that is contained in this letter. There is, I agree, a statement with reference to affairs in Kenya, but that, of course, is a very different business from India. There is also a general statement about the representation of common interests—

"unless a Parliamentary system is welded together by predominant common interests from its foundation in the electorate upwards no theoretical constitution that may be arrived at by a concordat among leaders of divergent interests . . . can prevent it from flying asunder."

That is the only passage that I can recall which has any likeness to the passage in the present letter. As your Lordships know the term "communal representation" is a very special term of art meaning a specific thing, and I do not think that any one reading the speech of the noble Lord could have supposed from his

observations about common interests that he was really referring to the substitution of a common electoral roll for the communal representation now obtaining in India.

However that may be, I attach no very great importance to that point for this reason—that it all depends, of course, on the circumstances under which the statement is made, on the importance that is given to that statement, and the surrounding conditions and feelings under which the statement is made. At the present moment, as your Lordships know, an investigation is going on into the defects in the working of the Act of 1919. A Committee has been investigating that matter. I understand that a further Committee with unofficial members is also going to deal with these defects. I do not think that the reference to the Committee which the noble Lord was kind enough to send me would admit of their dealing with this great subject of communal interest, but I suggest that people do not read very carefully terms of references to Committees, and it is very unfortunate that a reference should be made to the mind of the Secretary of State on so important a matter as communal representation just at the moment when an investigation is being conducted into the working of the Constitution; for a suspicion may very easily arise that this, among other subjects, is going to be considered by that particular Committee.

Let me address myself to the real gravity of spreading through India a statement of this kind in the present situation. It suggests, as I have said, that the Secretary of State is in favour of the abolition of communal representation—a great and an immense boon from the political point of view to the Hindu politician, but a great risk and danger to the vast Moslem community, the Sikh community, and the other smaller communities which have separate representation, a representation which they would not be entitled to if merely heads were counted.

This is a very old subject, as the Secretary of State knows. I was looking at the Report signed by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford on the Indian Constitutional Reforms. They have a paragraph dealing with this case. They express, first of all, as strongly as a Secretary of State can, that communal

~~electorates may be a serious hindrance to~~ the development of a self-governing system, but, after having expressed that opinion, they go on to say, in the strongest way, that they are in favour of communal representation, especially as regards the Moslems. They say that the Mahomedans were given special representation with separate electorates in 1909, and that the Mahomedan regards these reforms as settled facts, and that any attempt to go back on them would raise a storm of bitter protest and put a severe strain on the loyalty of an India which has behaved with conspicuous loyalty during a period of very great difficulty. The Mahomedans, again, regard separate representation and communal electorates as their own adequate safeguards. It is plain from this, and it is plain from other events, that the Moslems have a very strong feeling on this question of communal electorates.

Whatever their feeling may be—whether for home rule for themselves, or whether they would prefer to be under the Government of this country—there is no question that there is one form of Swaraj they do not want, and that is a Hindu Swaraj. Indeed, if self-government were granted to-morrow, if the declarations in many of these Election addresses were put into force to-morrow, I think it is probable that the desire and the determination of Moslem India to have separate communal representation would be even stronger than it is to-day. But, after all, this political aspect of it is only another aspect of the feeling which is expressed in a common speech. Whereas in this country you may ask whether a man is a Frenchman or an Englishman, in the East you are more inclined to ask: Is he a Moslem, is he a Hindu, or is he a Sikh?

There may be objections from the abstract political point of view to these communal electorates. There is, at the present moment, a very considerable reaction in many quarters in India against the impact of Western ideas. I think it would be very unfortunate if we strengthened the forces of that reaction by trying to force upon those communities one form of our Western institutions which is not justified by the conditions of the day, and by the political situation. It is very unfortunate, especially at this time and in view of recent history, that there should be any risk of stir-

ring up again Moslem feeling in that country. We know what disturbances were caused by the feeling respecting the tight bonds in which Turkey was tied by the Treaty of Sèvres, but as regards the Treaty of Lausanne which, as your Lordships know, in some quarters of this country met with criticism, there can be no doubt that so far as Indian feeling is concerned the settlement under that Treaty of Lausanne was wholly beneficent. It is very unfortunate when, after that settlement, Moslem feeling is quietening down that it should be stirred up again, and I am afraid, from certain evidence we have seen in the papers, it is being stirred again by the suspicion or the fear that there may be some desire in the mind of the Secretary of State—some sympathy in the mind of the Secretary of State with the suggestion—to go back on that settlement which was reached after so much discussion and examination.

I do not want to go over the whole field of Indian politics, but I should like to add that the same applies in the case of the Sikhs. We know very well that there has been a great disturbance, especially in the Punjab, mainly owing to the Akali movement which, starting as a religious movement, was seized upon by the politicians, and became a very large political movement. It has caused trouble to the successive Governors in the Punjab, but that feeling is quietening down and it would be a thousand pities if a fear that they would be swamped electorally by the surrounding population were to be aroused among the Sikhs by the publication of this letter.

I am going to ask one thing of the Secretary of State. I am going to ask him if he will be good enough—and I hope that he will do it—to state definitely in this House that whatever may have been the statements of the letter, whatever may have been his abstract view as to the relations of the communal system in the electorates to democratic government, yet that he has himself not the slightest intention—that it is far from his thought—of making any disturbance, or of altering in any way the settlement that was then arrived at. Therefore I urge upon him to quench the fire he has kindled before, by the breath of rumour and suspicion, it grows into a mightier conflagration. I beg to move.

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, I have been wondering for about a week what it was that we were to hear from the noble Viscount this evening; how, upon such an extraordinarily trivial and flimsy foundation as there has been for this Motion, he could venture to make a speech in your Lordships' House which would necessarily impose upon me the duty and the necessity of making you a rather long and serious reply upon a subject totally unworthy of so much attention. The noble Viscount has moved for Papers. I do not know quite what Papers he wants, but I will give him all the Papers that I have in this matter—that is to say, I will give him the history of the whole of this correspondence.

There is a gentleman in the Madras Council named Mr. Satyamurti. He is a member of the Swaraj Party. The Swaraj Party means the self-government Party, and it is the most advanced section of the reform movement in India, which is distributed into sections known as the Swarajists, the Independents, the Liberals and the Moderates, all of them aiming at self-government for India, but desiring to pursue a somewhat different pace of acceleration towards its attainment. Mr. Satyamurti had an interview with Mr. Montagu when he was in Office, and consequently I imagine him to be a person of some consideration and, at any rate, of reasonable address. Mr. Ben Spoor, now the Chief Whip of the Labour Party in the House of Commons, was in India some years ago and he formed the acquaintance of Mr. Satyamurti. When the Labour Government came into Office in January last Mr. Satyamurti forthwith addressed a friendly letter to Mr. Ben Spoor expressing his views on certain questions. Mr. Ben Spoor wrote back to Mr. Satyamurti and suggested that anything he wished to say about Indian matters should be addressed to myself.

I then received from Mr. Satyamurti this letter, which I will read:—

"Dear LORD OLIVIER,

"You will kindly excuse the liberty I take in writing to you without having the privilege of your acquaintance. My friend Mr. Ben Spoor has suggested my writing to you, and I am doing so. I may say at once

that I quite recognise the limitations of your Party, in Office, and not in power. I may add that I am a Swarajist and I believe fully in our programme, but I want to assure you that we are not political ogres and that we are only waiting for a right gesture on your part. Summon a round-table conference and you will find our leaders reasonable, practical and willing to recognise real Imperial obligations. Naturally, I am particularly interested in Madras. Diarchy has worked havoc here. A purely communal Party, with no political faith or programme, has been put in power and Madras promises to become the Ulster of India. We are just now forming a non-communal Party in the local Council. It is up to Lord Goschen to help us to the extent he can. I shall be glad to see him and put my point of view before him if he sends for me. I shall be glad to write to you in more detail on hearing from you."

I replied to that letter. I did not mark my letter private.

Some comment has been made by the noble Viscount as if it was an improper thing on the part of my correspondent to publish that letter. I did not write with the idea or the desire that he should publish it; but when I am writing a letter of an intimate character which I do not want on any account to be published, I mark it private. All my life I have made this my rule in ordinary circumstances—that if any person of any political Party whatever, however distant from my own views, whatever reputation he may enjoy among any other Party, writes to me a civil letter expressing certain views, then he will receive from me a civil and frank answer to the best of my ability.

And the answer I gave to this gentleman was a civil and frank answer, and in my opinion a perfectly discreet answer. I will read it to you again:—

"I have been glad to receive your letter"—

May I have the noble Viscount's attention, and I hope it will not be interrupted. The noble Viscount said that this letter will be studied by pundits who are careful interpreters of language. I am glad to think that that is so. I wrote as follows:—

"I have been glad to receive your letter of the 3rd instant, and am strongly disposed to share your confidence that a closer contact with the Swaraj party is very desirable."

That was an echo of a statement I made in this House with the authority and consent of His Majesty's Government. Consequently it was not a new pronouncement

on my part, but it expressed my sincere feeling and desire.

Let me read the passage to which I refer and as anticipating that communication :

"His Majesty's Government have been impressed by two characteristics in the atmosphere of Indian politics. The first is the intense and, as they are convinced, the grievously mistaken mistrust and the determination of uncompromising intransigence indicated in the election manifesto of the Swaraj party last autumn, and also the dissatisfaction expressed by more moderate advocates of self-government. Secondly, and more recently, an appreciable modification of that hostile and intransigent attitude has been indicated"—

And I may say that Mr. Satyamurti's letter is a very good example of it—

"not only in the recent proceedings in the Legislative Assembly, but in many communications and expressions of opinion which have reached His Majesty's Government, both through official and unofficial channels"—

I had not at that time received Mr. Satyamurti's letter—

"from persons representing weighty and influential opinion who are anxious that by some manner of conference a way forward may be found out of the present difficulties.

"His Majesty's Government . . . are earnestly desirous of availing themselves in whatever may be found the best possible method of this manifest disposition towards effectual consultation. Various modes of making this approach have been unofficially suggested. The Legislative Assembly have proposed a round-table conference. The Indian National Conference is proposing to send a deputation over, and representatives of Indian interests in his country have suggested a Mission to India. His Majesty's Government, while they are open to consider any practical proposals, are not yet satisfied as to what may be the best means for establishing that closer contact and better understanding that is so manifestly desirable. Some means of arriving at that closer contact must, they are convinced, be sought, and they hope, after due consultation with the Government of India, to be able with the least avoidable delay to decide upon the means they will desire to adopt."

I am repeating that statement because it is precisely the temper in which I wrote and phrased my answer to Mr. Satyamurti.

No one in this House will deny that better contact and a better understanding between members of the Swaraj Party and all other progressive Parties in India who are coming over to England, and sending deputations here to the Secretary

of State, cannot but work for the good of India and also for the better understanding of the difficulties with which we have to deal. Can any one take the slightest objection to the suggestion of that reasonable and very necessary resort? That is the first phrase of my letter. The second one is this:—

"I am interested to receive your observations on the working of diarchy in Madras and on your project of forming a non-communal party."

I do not think that phrase can be held to express any declaration of policy. I say "I am interested." I was.

"I rather gather from reading the debates of the Council that this was already the platform Swarajists desire."

In the Madras Council, owing to the enormous preponderance of non-Brahmins, a wholly non-Brahmin Ministry has been set up, and I noticed a movement in the Madras Council to protest that the interests of minorities were not being properly considered; that is to say, that the communal system, giving an enormous preponderance of non-Brahmin voters in Madras, was, in the opinion of the Swarajists, being somewhat misused.

Now I come to the phrase upon which the noble Viscount has built an enormous edifice:

"Certainly it seems to me that the maintenance of the communal system is antagonistic to the possibility of any proper working of democratic institutions in India."

The word "antagonistic" is a Greek word with the strict significance of which some journalists may not be familiar. To say that in my opinion a certain system is antagonistic to the working of democratic institutions is not, I can assure the noble Viscount, tantamount to saying that I am going to use my powers as Secretary of State immediately to force the Viceroy and his Council, the House of Lords and the House of Commons, to upset the Constitution of India. It expressed an opinion, and that opinion appears to me to be an exceedingly innocent opinion.

I heard in this House with great pleasure, about two or three months ago, a disquisition by the noble Earl, Lord Balfour, in which he surveyed the question as to how far and in what respect the peculiar characteristics of the Indian nation might make them fit for democratic

institutions, and, so far as I myself was concerned, I did make, on February 26, the observation which the noble Viscount has quoted regarding the effect of the communal system on the working of democratic institutions. Since the noble Viscount has proposed to raise this question in this House and to challenge me upon it, I have looked up the statements of other authorities upon this subject, other critics of Indian Government and Indian institutions, and I have found, as I expected, that they are one and all of exactly the same opinion as myself, including the noble Viscount—I will quote the noble Viscount—that the working of this system is antagonistic to democratic institutions.

Before I pass to that point, however, I should like to give your Lordships a sketch of that which is called the communal organisation of politics in India, and I think that when I have given it your Lordships will admit that it is rather in the nature of a crazy quilt, liable to produce nightmare in any of those who have to administer the Constitution under it. The rules made under the Govern-

Mahomedans	...	...	...	...	...
Non-Mahomedans (i.e., in effect, Hindus)	...	...	...	...	...
Europeans	...	...	...	...	...
Anglo-Indians (generally people of mixed race)	...	...	...	...	...
Sikhs	...	...	...	...	...
Indian Christians	...	...	...	...	...

In all these cases the electors must be of the community specified, and members of one community cannot vote in the electorate of any other community. In all cases also the candidate must be of the same community as that of the electorate for which he sits, except in Assam and the United Provinces where this restriction on candidatures does not (in theory) apply. In Burma the bulk of the general constituencies are non-communal, but there are constituencies set apart for Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Karens and Indians, who, if they live in areas which form these constituencies, can vote only for candidates of their own race.

The special constituencies are of the following kinds, to give special representation

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ment of India Act prescribe, *inter alia*, "the qualifications of electors, the constitution of constituencies and the method of election for . . . Councils, including the number of members to be elected by communal and other electorates," and "the qualification for being and for being nominated or elected a member of any such Council." The rules framed under these provisions classify electorates as general and special, and the general constituencies are on a territorial basis—that is to say, each covers a defined territorial area consisting, in the case of certain constituencies, of a single town or a group of towns, and in the case of rural constituencies of a district or group of districts, and in a few cases of a whole Province. With the single exception of Burma, general constituencies are communal; that is to say, a given area in a Province forms several constituencies, which consist of the qualified electors of a particular community resident in the area.

Communities for which their own general constituencies thus exist are:

In all Provinces, except Burma.
In all Provinces, except Burma.
In all provinces, except Assam. (In the Punjab and the Central Provinces, by nomination.)
In Madras, Bengal and Burma. (In Bombay, the United Provinces and the Central Provinces, by nomination.)
In the Punjab.
In Madras. (In Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab and Bihar, by nomination.)

to the interests denoted by the names: to landholders, in all Provinces; to Universities—that is an anomaly of which we are still suffering the presence—in all Provinces; to commerce and industry, in all Provinces except Bihar; to planters, in Madras, Bihar and Assam; and to mining in Bihar and the Central Provinces. These are instances of the special representation of classes or communities. Besides communal electorates, provision exists in the rules for the special representation of certain classes or communities by nomination, that is, by earmarking for them one or more of the seats which the Governor fills by nomination. These are:—(1) Depressed classes—in all Provinces but the Punjab and Assam; (2) inhabitants of "backward

tracts"—in Madras and Assam; (3) the labouring classes—in Bombay, Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Burma; (4) the cotton trades—in Bombay; (5) Punjabi officers and soldiers—in the Punjab; (6) aborigines—in Bihar; (7) Bengali domiciled community—in Bihar; (8) industrial interests—in Bihar; (9) Indian commerce—in Burma. It will thus be seen that the special provision by nomination partakes of the character in some cases of general (communal) constituencies and in others of special constituencies. It is made in cases in which the nature of the interest or community in question is such as 'to make the provision of electoral facilities difficult or impossible. In Madras and Bombay twenty-eight and six seats respectively in certain plural-member non-Mahomedan constituencies are reserved for non-Brahmins by an arrangement which ensures that, if there is a non-Brahmin candidate for one of these seats, he secures it whatever his position at the poll.

Those are the electoral arrangements which resulted from the attempt to put into force the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms under the best system possible at the present time. With regard to the statements of my noble friend Lord Chelmsford and of Mr. Montagu, the noble Viscount has given a very garbled extract; that is to say, he took out one particular sentence of what they wrote. I am going to read to your Lordships what is practically the more important part of what they wrote, indicating the place where the reservation which the noble Viscount made comes in. First of all they say, under a heading to the effect that communal electorates are opposed to the teaching of history:—

"The crucial test to which, as we conceive, all proposals should be brought is whether they will or will not help to carry India towards responsible government. . . . But when we consider what responsible government implies and how it was developed in the world we cannot take this view. We find it in its earliest beginnings resting on an effective sense of the common interests, a bond compounded of community of race, religion and language."

The noble Viscount quoted me as saying—and I am much obliged to him for quoting it, for it will save me the trouble—that one of the great difficulties of establishing democracy in India was that

the community was so divided by divergent racial and temperamental interests, and His Majesty's Government did not believe that until those divergent interests and temperaments had been consolidated into a common public purpose you could have stable institutions in India. That he quoted from me, and I am obliged to him for doing so.

The Report continued:—

"In the earlier form which it assumed in Europe it appeared only when the territorial principle had vanquished the tribal principle, and blood and religion had ceased to assert a rival claim with the State to a citizen's allegiance; and throughout its development in Western countries, even in cases where special reasons to the contrary were present, it has rested consistently on the same root principle. . . . We conclude unhesitatingly that the history of self-government among the nations who developed it, and spread it through the world is decisively against the admission by the State of any divided allegiance; against the State's arranging its members in any way which encourages them to think of themselves primarily as citizens of any smaller unit than itself.

"Indian lovers of their country would be the first to admit that India generally has not yet acquired the citizen spirit, and if we are really to lead her to self-government, we must do all that we possibly can to call it forth in her people. Division by creeds and classes means the creation of political camps organised against each other, and teaches men to think as partisans and not as citizens; and it is difficult to see how the change from this system to national representation is ever to occur. The British Government is often accused of dividing men in order to govern them. But if it unnecessarily divides them at the very moment when it professes to start them on the road to governing themselves, it will find it difficult to meet the charge of being hypocritical or short sighted.

"There is another important point. A minority which is given special representation owing to its weak and backward state, is positively encouraged to settle down into a feeling of satisfied security; it is under no inducement to educate and qualify itself to make good the ground which it has lost compared with the stronger majority. On the other hand, the latter will be tempted to feel that they have done all they need do for their weaker fellow countrymen and that they are free to use their power for their own purposes. The give-and-take which is the essence of political life is lacking. There is no inducement to the one side to forbear, or to the other to exert itself. The communal system stereotypes existing relations.

"We regard any system of communal electorates, therefore, as a very serious hindrance to the development of the self-governing principle. The evils of any extension of the system are plain . . ."

Then the writers of the Report refer to the fact that communal representation had been necessarily granted to the Moslems, and that there was no question of recommending its being withdrawn. They also went on to say that communal representations of the Sikhs was suggested. The Report goes on:—

"At the same time we must face the hard facts. The Mahomedans were given special representation with separate electorates in 1909. . . . We have been pressed to extend the concession to other communities. Some have based their claim on their backward, others on their advanced condition. Thus the Sikhs in the Punjab, the non-Brahmins in Madras (although in that Presidency these actually constitute a majority), the Indian Christians, the Anglo-Indians, the Europeans, and the Lingayat community in Bombay have all asked for communal representation. The large land-owning classes also generally desire representation in an electorate of their own. . . . Any general extension of the communal system, however, would only encourage still further demands, and would in our deliberate opinion be fatal to that development of representation upon a national basis in which alone a system of responsible government can possibly be rooted.

A very able and distinguished Committee was appointed on that Report under the Chairmanship of Lord Southborough, to make recommendations with regard to the franchise and electoral districts. They were appointed to advise on arranging a system of representation, and this is what they say:—

"The Joint Report recognises the necessity for the communal representation of Mahomedans in Provinces where they do not form a majority of electors. The evidence received by us and the opinions of local Governments concerned were almost unanimous in favour of this course. In the Punjab we have recommended a separate electoral roll and separate constituencies for the Sikhs. The other communities for which we recommend separate communal electorates are Indian Christians, Europeans and Anglo-Indians. . . . In recommending communal representation for these and other communities, we have done so in the hope that it will be possible at no very distant date to merge all communities into one general electorate."

Those are the recommendations of Lord Southborough's Committee. Not, as the *Daily Telegraph* puts it, the recommendations of regrettable doctrinaires, but of sober English and Indian opinion, public officials and statesmen of long experience. Their opinion coincides exactly with my own.

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Then there is the Government of India's Despatch on the above Report, No. 4, dated April 23, 1919, and it is as follows:—

"In the event, communal electorates are now proposed not only for Moslems everywhere and for Sikhs in the Punjab, but also for Indian Christians in Madras, Anglo-Indians in Madras and Bengal and Europeans in the three Presidencies, the United Provinces and Bihar and Orissa. We feel the objections of principle to the communal system as strongly as the authors of the Reforms Report but see no advantage at this stage in reiterating them. India is not prepared to take the first steps forward towards responsible government upon any other road. The road does not lead directly to that goal, and we can only echo the hope expressed by the Committee that 'it will be possible at no very distant date to merge all communities in one general electorate.'"

Now, I will read to your Lordships one or two extracts from speeches in Parliament. In the House of Commons, during the debate in Committee on the Government of India Bill on December 3, 1919. Mr. Montagu said:—

"Nobody objects more than I do to communal representation. I believe it to be a great mistake, but there is one mistake which would be greater and that is to get Legislative Councils in India that are not properly representative of all classes; and if communal elections are provided for temporarily in order to ensure that, I believe they are well worth having."

Then, in the House of Lords, during the debate on the Second Reading of the Government of India Bill on December 12, 1919, Viscount Midleton said:—

"I do not suppose under any circumstances in this country could it occur that we should be placed in the position in which the members of the Committee were placed, of having a remonstrance addressed to us most fervently, and continuously pressed home, that we should carry out the communal system of representation, described by Lord Sydenham, in such a way that although the non-Brahmin population in Madras is 27,000,000 and the Brahmin population 1,000,000 we should give quite a different representation to the Brahmins, in order to preserve the great influence of the small minority. That is a state of affairs which shows that you have to deal with India in a different spirit from that in which you would deal with any electorate in this country.

Again, in the House of Commons, during the debate on the Rules under the Government of India Act on July 23, 1920, Mr. Montagu said:—

"I would welcome the disappearance of communal representation in India, but it can only be done at the request of the com-

munity itself and at a far later stage of development."

Then Mr. Ormsby-Gore said these words to the same effect:—

"The vast majority of the Indian Christians in Madras do for the present want this communal representation. I quite agree that the sooner we can get rid of it in India altogether the better."

Finally, I come to the noble Viscount. In the debate on the communal franchise in Kenya, on July 26, 1923, the noble Viscount spoke as follows:—

"Let me allude to one or two points in the White Paper. My noble friend Lord Selborne made a most eloquent defence of the communal system. It was so eloquent and earnest that I thought that he, as Chairman of the Joint Committee, must have been the author of it. I am sure it will interest him to know that, although that system in many ways has prevailed in India, there is in the Assembly and in the Council of State a very strong feeling against it.

"Although the noble Earl says it is an Indian invention they do not seem to be so proud of their own offspring. They say: 'We do not look upon it as a great invention. We think that where it can be avoided it should be avoided.'"

I should have thought that I was entitled to quote what the noble Viscount said as evidence of his own feelings, but I gather that he rather objects.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I was expressing there not my view. I was trying to express in this House the view prevailing in certain political circles in the Assembly and in the Council of State. I did not say it was my view.

LORD OLIVIER: I am satisfied to leave it at that, and to say that that view prevailed in the Council of State, in which case I cannot be accused of being extremely subversive of the Indian Government by saying that that is also my opinion. But, the noble Viscount having demurred to my quoting him, on the ground that he was speaking of Kenya, I will not press that argument.

Those, then, are the views of the Government of India in Council, of high Government officials, and of members of all Parties in this country, to the effect that the communal system of representation is antagonistic to the progress of democratic institutions. As I said, not everybody appears to understand what the word "antagonistic" means. It means that it militates against the

progress of democratic institutions. That appears to be an obvious truism, and I do not believe there is anybody in this House who has given any attention to political philosophy who would for a moment question it, or would attempt to traverse the very strong arguments that were put forward in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report to that effect, all of which I have not read. It must be a political truism that to have a mosaic of communal constituencies, all of which are exacerbating their own differences, is antagonistic to the progress of democratic institutions; and no possible exception can be taken to that.

I want to refer to some of the comments that have been made upon this letter of mine, because I think the attitude which has been taken up towards this episode evidences a temper and a habit of judgment which are extremely antagonistic to the public interest, and I want to comment upon it rather freely. We get first this statement in a telegram from Calcutta:

"The fear that the Labour Government, despite the assurances to the contrary which have been given in statements in Parliament, is inclined to seek a compromise with the Indian extremists is likely to be increased by the wording of a remarkable letter which has been received——"

Then the letter is quoted, and this ominous paragraph follows:

"The Secretary of State's explanation as to how he reconciles these sentiments with his recent public pronouncements, is awaited with eager interest in India."

I have pointed out already that this letter is exactly in accordance with what I stated in your Lordships' House.

Another paper says this:

"An extraordinary story circulated by an Indian news agency last night purporting to quote a letter from Lord Olivier to Mr. S. Satyamurti, the well-known Swarajist and member of the Madras Legislative Council, was temporarily suppressed by the papers here in response to a request from the issuing agency."

You observe the way in which a newspaper sensation is being worked up. The next day the following telegram appeared:

"The alacrity with which Mr. S. Satyamurti, the Swarajist member of the Madras Legislative Council, agreed to accept full responsibility for the publication of Lord Olivier's letter is a strong piece of evidence favouring the widely held opinion in India that the Secretary of State has been trapped

into a carefully prepared plot by the Swarajists. . . . To say that Lord Olivier's letter, though carefully worded, is regarded here as a grave error of judgment, is putting the case very mildly, and it is felt that some official pronouncement is called for immediately."

My official pronouncement would be that His Majesty's Government consider that improved contact and understanding between the Government and the Swaraj and other advanced Parties in India is not only desirable, but that the Viceroy is considering with His Majesty's Government the best means by which that contact can be established, and is taking means towards that end. Also, I am of opinion that communal representative institutions are antagonistic to the progress of sound democracy. That is the statement which I have to make.

The newspaper quotes from the *Statesman*:

"Private advices from England indicate that a determined attempt is being made to stampede public opinion and the Labour Government into a hasty, ill-considered action with regard to the reforms. Among other points upon which these attacks are converging is the question of communal representation, to which the extremist politicians and, to some extent, the Hindus, are generally opposed because they consider the earmarking of certain constituencies for certain communities is likely to prejudice their interests. . . . It is evident from Lord Olivier's letter that the politicians who are now pressing the claims of India to a fuller measure of autonomy have placed the communal system in the forefront of their case and it is only too clear that they receive a sympathetic hearing. Unless, therefore, wise counsels prevail, there is reason to fear that the proposed amendment to the Government of India Act will force India a long step further on the path towards tyranny. . . . India, alas! seems doomed to suffer from the dreams of the doctrinaire"—

such as the noble Lord, Lord Southborough, and the Council of India and Lord Chelmsford—

"and it is a grave disappointment to learn that a man of Lord Olivier's experience is powerless to shake himself free from the influence of preconceived opinion."

The whole of that is a mare's nest, so far, at any rate, as either I myself or, so far as I am aware, any members of the Government are concerned.

I have had conversations, as it was proper for me to do, with the representatives of all shades of opinion in India, beginning with ex-Governors, members of the European community, members of the

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mercantile community, Indians of almost all shades of opinion, including Mr. Rangachariar, who is now on an official mission to this country, deputed by the Government of India, and Mr. Sastri, a member of the Liberal Party. Curiously enough, I had myself, without having been previously "entrapped," expressed that view to Mr. Satyamurti, but not a single one of any of the Indians who have spoken to me has as much as raised or mentioned the question of communal representation, except Mr. Sastri, who criticised it in respect of its operation in Madras. Mr. Sastri has made to me no official representations on behalf of the Independent Party which he represents. I understand that the Independent Party propose at a later date to approach the Prime Minister or myself by a deputation to put before us their views. But there has been no shadow of an indication on the part of these deeply-plotting Swarajists in England, or India, or elsewhere, so far, that they want to stampede the Labour Government or to entrap them into any kind of promise that they are going to abolish the communal representation, and if the noble Viscount wants any assurance from me that His Majesty's Government have not taken into consideration for a moment up to the present the question of any modification of the communal representation he has it, and he has no ground whatever for assuming from anything that I wrote in my letter that either His Majesty's Government or I had any intention of doing so.

I will go on now with a few more of these choice extracts. The determined effort to stampede is again referred to. Then there is a further comment—

"While the official statement from London that Lord Olivier's letter to Mr. Satyamurti contained nothing that the Secretary of State had not already said, may be literally accurate"—

That statement was made by Mr. Richards in Parliament in reply to a Question, and it had my authority. The letter was not written with a desire for it to be published, and the letter contained nothing, as I said, that I have not already given expression to. This comment, however, is made—

"While the official statement . . . that Lord Olivier's letter . . . contained nothing that the Secretary of State had not already said, may be literally accurate, his expression of desire for closer contact

with the Swaraj Party, being made to a notoriously anti-British politician, is a big advance on Mr. Richards' House of Commons statement of April 15 that the Government desired to establish contact with those Indians who were prepared to co-operate."

That brings me really to the close of what I wanted to say. These Press extracts, culminating in that statement that I had expressed the desire for closer contact with a notoriously anti-British politician, indicate throughout the temper in which the Party in India who resist all progress habitually approach these matters. That is a very mischievous temper. I have no ground whatever, and I do not suppose that anybody has any ground whatever, for saying that Mr. Satyamurti is an anti-British politician. His letter to me contradicts it. He says that he is not an anti-British politician. He desires to maintain the union and association of India with Great Britain.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I did not say so.

LORD OLIVIER: The noble Viscount did not, but this is the quotation from a Calcutta correspondent and the whole of this Press "stunt" is inspired, it is perfectly clear, by what one may call a suppressed complex of suspicion, first of all, of the Labour Government and, secondly, of that particular Party in Indian politics who are called the Swarajists. That is to say, it is immediately assumed that when the Labour Party come into office they are prepared to be stampeded, and it is immediately assumed that the Swarajists are prepared to entrap and stampede them. It is also indicated that it is something disloyal or improper or strange on the part of the Secretary of State that he should address a civil letter to an elected politician. You have that sort of feeling reflected in the supplementary Questions that were asked in the House of Commons the other evening.

Lieut.-Colonel Howard-Bury asked this supplementary Question—

"Is this an example of the new methods of the Government for communicating Cabinet decisions to the people of India?"

A frivolous question! Then Viscount Curzon asked—

"Are we to understand that the Government view with approval the action of the Secretary of State in communicating direct with this extremist leader in India?"

I wonder in what sort of political world I am living when that kind of question

can be put in all seriousness in the House of Commons of this country. Because a man happens to be a member of the Cabinet he is not to write such a civil letter as I wrote to a man who is a representative, and a constitutionally appointed representative, of a considerable Party in India!

The Swaraj Party, the Home Rule Party, are, as I have said, the most advanced cohort of the entire Indian national movement. They have at present a considerable majority in two or three of the Councils, and altogether they have the strongest representation of any political Party in the Councils and in the Assembly in India. They have a constitutional position and a constitutional right to be recognised as enjoying the privileges, the confidence and the credit attaching to their constitutional position which your Lordships have created for them. You have no business whatever to say that any one should have any more prejudice against a Swarajist than against a Moderate, or an Independent or a Liberal. They are all of them elected representatives in their various Councils, and they are entitled to be regarded without prejudice either by the Government of India or by the Government of this country. I repudiate entirely the theory that because the Swarajists are giving the Government of India a certain amount of trouble, as I have said, because they are pursuing their perfectly constitutional aim in what we consider to be a factious and mistaken manner, they are to be regarded as a kind of political outcasts and as antagonists and enemies of Great Britain, and that we are to be asked: "Why do you write civilly to these people? If you write civilly to them you at once discourage the Moderates and the Independents who would be your backers."

We desire, by arriving at an understanding with all Parties, to get as much backing as we can on all political questions from all Parties, and we have said that again and again. I have said it in this House, and my right hon. friend has said it in another place. It is not the fact that the Swaraj Party are at the present time entirely non-cooperating. At the present moment there is being discussed in the Legislative Assembly in India a Tariff Bill for the protection of steel. That was referred by the Assembly to a Select Committee.

That Select Committee included members of the Swaraj Party. Those members of the Swaraj Party are dealing with it without any prejudice, simply on its merits as a political question. They are not saying: "This is a Bill of the Government of India and we are going to hamper it and to sabotage it." They are dealing with it on its merits. That is an advance, at any rate, to that kind of co-operation which the Swarajists can perfectly well undertake without in the slightest degree prejudicing their political programme, and in my opinion they will very much strengthen their chance of advancing towards that programme by adopting that line of action. I do most entirely protest against the attitude which is too often taken up, and I am sorry to say I see it in some of the Reports which I get from the Government of India, regarding the Swaraj Party, simply because of their constitutional agitation, as being persons who are to be discriminated against as distinguished from other politicians.

On February 26 the noble Marquess, Lord Curzon, made a comment upon one of the matters to which I referred—namely, the handling by the Government of India of the Jaito disturbance, and he expressed very boldly the opinion that "there must have been regrettable mismanagement somewhere to have brought about a state of affairs in which you have bodies of Sikh fanatics marching about the country," and so on. That is the sort of criticism of the Government of India which, if I had made it, would have meant at once a tremendous attack upon me for belittling the Government of India.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I said that there must have been mismanagement somewhere. I did not attack the Government of India. I did not attack anybody. I alluded to a deplorable situation, to a state of affairs which has grown up in India with the explanation of which I was not acquainted, but which, evidently, did indicate some gross mismanagement on the part of some persons. Then the noble Lord gets up and says I am making an attack on the Government of India.

LORD OLIVIER: I do not think I used the word "attack." The noble Marquess said there must have been grave mismanagement somewhere. Who was re-

Lord Olivier.

sponsible for managing the affair if not the Government of India? The noble Marquess went on to say that he thought things would be put right when we got Sir Malcolm Hailey as Governor of the Punjab. If he could manage it right, who could manage it wrong? The noble Marquess said that he made no direct attack. No, he made a criticism. When I want to steal a horse I shall get the noble Marquess to do it, and I shall turn my back to the hedge carefully. I should not have dared to say so much in disparagement of the management of India as the noble Marquess clearly and definitely said in those words.

I say this further, that I, unfortunately, see in the reports which I receive from districts and otherwise that there is a constant tendency on the part of officers of the Government rather to hold themselves justified in regarding the Swarajists as treasonable persons and to treat them in a somewhat objectionable manner, subjecting them to pin-pricks, to disparagement, and special treatment, regarding the Swarajist Party as we used to regard the Home Rule Party in Ireland, as a Party with which no respectable politician could possibly associate or have anything to do. That is unfortunate. This Press "stunt," which has come from Calcutta and elsewhere, is an indication of the miserable temper of supposing that the Swarajists are traitorous people, that they are worse than other politicians, and want to entrap and bamboozle the Secretary of State and the Labour Party, as if the Labour Party were capable of being stampeded by them. The policy of the Labour Party has been stated to your Lordships' House, and it is proceeding.

Having regard to the complaints that have been made as to the working of the present Constitution in India, the Government of India has established a Committee with a view to finding out what amendments, if any, are required in the Act by rules or otherwise. First of all, that Committee was appointed as an official Committee. It has now been enlarged, and I have given the noble Viscount the reference to it. Only yesterday the Government of India proceeded on these lines which I indicated that His Majesty's Government would be glad that they should proceed, and are adding unofficial members to that Committee with a view to seeing whether we

shall receive from unofficial critics representations with regard to the working of the Government of India Act. That is an advance towards greater and better contact, and if, by perhaps harmless letters and such harmless correspondence as has passed between myself and Mr. Satyamurti, any kind of better contact or understanding can be established between ourselves and those advanced politicians in India, I shall be exceedingly glad, and I shall not for a moment be ashamed of what I have done.

I do hope that no one of your Lordships who is to follow me will say that you have received any relief or satisfaction from what I have told you. What I have told you with regard to the policy of His Majesty's Government has been told you already. The policy of His Majesty's Government has not been altered or modified or departed from. I must say that, on the whole, I am grateful to the noble Viscount for having given me this opportunity of expressing myself on the subject and of making this protest. I beg him to believe that, while I should myself have considered it too trivial a matter for so serious notice to be taken of it, I am not at all sure that it has not been, on the whole, in the public interest that some discussion should have taken place.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, I do not think the speech which the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, has just delivered is one of which, if he reads it in print to-morrow morning, he will have any particular occasion to be proud. Of one thing I am sure he has not convinced your Lordships, and that is that this matter is as trivial as he led your Lordships to think, and that, to quote the words with which he opened, it was quite unworthy of the attention of your Lordships' House. If that were his view he would not have spent fifty-five minutes in attempting to demonstrate the contrary. He evidently regarded it, as a matter of very serious importance, so important indeed that, having dealt with the charge, to which matter I will confine myself, he thought it necessary to attach to his argument a discussion of almost every other aspect of the Indian question, and to indulge in observations with reference to the political position in India,

and to those who criticised him, and so on, the greater part of which was wholly irrelevant to the comparatively narrow, though important, point that was raised by my noble friend Lord Peel.

The chief reflection that was borne in upon me as I listened to the rambling remarks of the noble Lord was this, that His Majesty's Ministers are really the most inexperienced, the most ignorant, and the most sensitive body of men who ever sat upon that Bench. They make the most astonishing speeches, and are surprised when they are asked to explain them. But whatever you may think of their speeches, their letters are positively amazing. We never know from day to day with what new situation we are going to be confronted. One day it is the Home Secretary who, although a politician of some experience, plunges unasked into the maelstrom of European politics, and has to be disowned by his chief. The same Home Secretary, only during the last week, has made another divagation into the field of South African politics. Subordinate members of the Ministry cannot keep quiet for a week. Now the noble Lord, whom I have hitherto regarded as a rather quiet and stable sort of person, seems to me to be the worst offender. And the worst part of it is, he is wholly unconscious of his error, and has spent the greater part of an hour this afternoon in pointing out to your Lordships' House that he is a most innocent person, and that everybody else in the world is carrying on a "stunt," to use his classic phrase, of which he himself especially is the quite unmerited victim.

Let us deal with the case. The noble Lord has written a letter. The terms of that letter were read by my noble friend. What is the defence of the noble Lord in reply? He says, in the first place, that his letter was written to a highly respectable Indian politician who was a friend of Mr. Montagu's. I do not desire to say one word against the gentleman referred to. He seems to me, if I may say so, to have been, on the evidence of the noble Lord, an exceedingly shrewd person, and to know pretty well the sort of conditions under which Labour Ministers can be approached. He said, in the first place, that he was aware of the limitations under which a Labour Government rests. He did not know how easy a Labour Government finds it to relax those limita-

tions, at any rate in speech and in letters. He said, in the second place, that he was expecting some sort of gesture—"right gesture" I think the phrase was—from His Majesty's advisers.

Now we will take the gesture itself. The noble Lord seemed to think it was an adequate defence to say that when a civil communication is sent to him he ought to return a civil reply—a civil and frank reply. I do the noble Lord the justice of believing that he is incapable of returning any other reply. But this is not a case of the ordinary exchange of civil letters between a correspondent and a gentleman who chooses to address him in England. This is the case of correspondence between an Indian politician of admittedly advanced views and a Secretary of State. The noble Lord then says, in self-defence, that all he expressed was an innocent and a philosophical opinion. I agree with the noble Lord as to his innocence. It is almost incredible. But as for his philosophy it is not the business of Secretaries of State to be philosophers. If the noble Lord desires to make philosophical statements about Indian politics let him do it in the silence of his own chamber. Do not let him do it in letters which are published to the world. Indian Secretaries of State are not abstract persons who can indulge in abstract generalities. They are concrete individuals charged with great responsibilities whose words are circulated throughout India and whose opinions carry an importance which the noble Lord seemed quite unable to appreciate.

The third defence which the noble Lord offered for his action was that he was merely expressing in his letter opinions to which he had already given utterance in your Lordships' House. That is not so. I do not say anything about the first part of the letter, his general sympathy with Swarajist aims, because I have not sufficient time in which to deal with it. But the second part of the letter, which is the real gravamen of the charge brought by my noble friend—namely, that "the maintenance of the communal system is antagonistic to the possibility of any proper working of democratic institutions in India"—is certainly not what the noble Lord has said on previous occasions, and it is a point of view which he admitted

in the concluding sentences of his speech is not shared as regards action by the Government of India or even by His Majesty's Government at home.

Why is it that a statement by the noble Lord, even couched in abstract and philosophic form, upon this question is unwise? I think I would put it as follows. In the first place, it can only produce, and it has already produced as is obvious from the quotations which the noble Lord gave, considerable excitement and unrest in India. He seemed to confine himself to the disparaging remarks about himself that have emanated from the European Press. I do not attach any particular importance to them. What I look to are the sentiments that have been expressed by those communities in India whose security consists in the retention of the communal system. I look to the feelings of Mahomedans, to whom the noble Viscount called attention, and such indications as I see lead me to think that the Mahomedans in India are gravely alarmed at the suggestion that the Secretary of State for India disapproves altogether of that which they regard as the main safeguard of their interests and the individuality of their community.

Take again the Sikhs. The noble Lord was quite angry that I had indicated that the recent agitation in the Sikh community was due to mismanagement somewhere. I do not desire to pursue that point, but he will agree that the one thing we want as regards the Sikhs is to get them back into the condition of contentment and loyalty which up to a few years ago they had observed. If you indicate to them that the Secretary of State is opposed to the communal system without which they will be submerged and their voice extinguished, you are going a long way to exaggerate the feelings of distrust that unhappily already exist among that important community.

There is also the point made by the noble Viscount behind me. Did the noble Lord consider, in making that declaration, whether the announcement at the present time would be acceptable to the Government of India and whether it would strengthen their hands? Did he consider whether it was consistent with the general lines of policy we have been pursuing ever since the Montagu-Chelmsford Report took the shape of legislation, which was passed by your Lordships'

House. The noble Lord comforts himself by the statement that it is merely the legitimate expression of opinion to say that "the maintenance of the communal system is antagonistic to the possibility of any proper working of democratic institutions in India." Why should the noble Lord set himself up as a judge of what is the proper working of democratic institutions in India?

LORD OLIVIER: I was humbly following a large number of better qualified judges.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Then my remarks are not applicable to the noble Lord alone. Why should any one lay down, of a population of 320 millions, split asunder by every diversity of race, religion, language and creed, that the communal system, introduced by His Majesty's Government themselves, is inconsistent with the development of democratic institutions? And are you quite certain that the democratic institutions of which you speak, and the principles which you are advocating, are suitable to the peoples of India at all? Are we wise here in laying it down that because we in Western countries, with centuries of development and experience behind us, have arrived at certain broad principles and conclusions, we are therefore justified in laying them down for, or offering them to, all the diversified communities of India? The answer, of course, is contained in the very document which the noble Lord quoted. To justify himself he referred to the Report signed by Mr. Montagu and Viscount Chelmsford, and he read from that Report passages containing a metaphysical discussion of what responsible self-government really means, or ought to mean. I have read those passages also. From whom they emanated I have no idea, but I can hardly believe that they represent the views of so sensible a man as Lord Chelmsford. They are written in a general philosophical and abstract way.

But after paying this lip service to the real meaning of democracy, what did the Montagu-Chelmsford Report go on to do? It went on at once to provide for the creation and maintenance of the very communal system which, in theory, they denounced, and which the noble Lord himself proceeded to explain to your Lordships. His speech was the most powerful

vindication of the communal system in India that could be desired. What did he tell us? He said not merely do Mahomedans in India require for their due representation to have a system of special representation of their own, not merely is it necessary for the Sikhs to have an opportunity to have it too, but you have to provide it by the creation of special electorates and nominations for such sections of the community as the planters, the Anglo-Indians, the great landowners, the miners—I might indefinitely extend the list quoted by the noble Lord. Therefore, he himself showed that the Government, which is the author of these reforms which he is defending and desires to extend, finds itself unable to act up to its abstract principles and is compelled in practice to introduce as the whole basis of representation in India a system which he dislikes.

That is the position, and I confess that the action of the Secretary of State, from which, as he has told us, he is not going to depart, and from which the Government of which he is a member dare not depart—the action of a Secretary of State who, in an incautious letter to a prominent politician in India, says that he personally dislikes the system thus administered and would like to see it abolished, and that it is not compatible with the principles which he and his colleagues avow—is not only indiscreet, but is deserving of the gravest condemnation at the hands of your Lordships' House. I promised I would be short in my observations, and I will not pursue the matter. I regret that the noble Lord thought it necessary in the latter part of his observations to think that he is the victim of some special and malignant misrepresentation or attack at the hands either of the European community in India or of any body of opinion in this country. That is very far from being the case.

LORD OLIVIER: I did not refer to myself personally, but to the Labour Party.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I think the noble Lord did signal out the attacks which have been made upon him personally in newspapers in India, but, whether he was referring to himself or to the Labour Party, I would ask him to disabuse himself of that idea.

LORD OLIVIER: The suggestion was that the Labour Party had been stampeded.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I think the noble Lord has really shown undue sensitiveness upon that point. In this House, certainly, every consideration has been shown to him on every occasion when he has addressed your Lordships. I would beg him, therefore, not to pursue that line of argument, and not to be surprised if incautious utterances of his call for the explanation for which the noble Viscount has asked to-night.

It only remains for me, in conclusion, to take note of the fact, and to nail the point to the counter, that the noble Lord, although he has expressed these abstract views of his own, has stated with even greater clearness that the Government of which he is a member has no intention of abolishing the communal system, that this pronouncement must not be taken as indicating any change of policy, that it was an utterance on his part, as we think, irresponsible, as he thinks innocent, and that no importance whatever must be attached to it. That it should require a reply of fifty-five minutes' duration on the part of the noble Lord to demonstrate to the House that we need not attach any importance to that which he said is, I think, an extraordinary phenomenon, but at the same time I am prepared to accept it if only for the satisfactory nature of the general declaration with which he has furnished us.

THE LORD SPEAKER (EARL BEAUCHAMP): Does the noble Viscount wish to press the Motion for Papers?

VISCOUNT PEEL: No, I will not ask for Papers.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

SUPERIOR CIVIL SERVICES COMMISSION.

VISCOUNT PEEL: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government whether the Indian Legislative Assembly will be afforded an opportunity of discussing the recommendations of Viscount Lee of Fareham's Commission on the Indian Services during the present short Session, in view of the fact that no further sittings

of that Assembly will be held until the month of September.

I can deal with this Question, though it is important in substance, very shortly, but I must in two or three sentences explain the reason why I put it down. On the occasion of the setting up of this Commission, I made a statement in the nature of a pledge as to the opportunity that might be afforded the Legislative Assembly in India to discuss this Report. It was a carefully guarded statement, and I think I ought perhaps to read to your Lordships the actual statement as it was made by the Home Member, Sir Malcolm Hailey, in the Legislative Assembly. He was speaking, I think, in March of this year, and he repeated a statement which he made in July. He said:

"In July last I said: 'We cannot here, either as an Assembly or as a Government of India, limit the constitutional and statutory powers of the Secretary of State in this respect, and, if there are matters pressed upon him by the Royal Commission which require immediate orders, then it will be necessary to recognise his power to take a decision in advance of any discussion by the Assembly. For the rest, we shall be quite prepared to allow the Assembly an opportunity of discussing the main recommendations of the Royal Commission; we shall meet any views it may advance in discussion in the usual way, and shall forward its recommendations to the Secretary of State.'"

That is the quotation which Sir Malcolm Hailey gave from his own statement.

He went on to say:

"That was a formal declaration made in recognition of the constitutional powers of the Secretary of State. We cannot tie his hands, but I have no doubt that he will endeavour to allow full discussion here before any action is taken on the main recommendations of the Commission."

As the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, well knows, the Assembly is at present sitting, but the Session is, I understand, likely to be a short one. No other Session is likely to be called or take place until September, and I am anxious that the proposals made by Viscount Lee of Fareham and his Commission should, if possible, be discussed during the present Session.

I will tell your Lordships why. It is obvious, after the great despatch with which Lord Lee and his colleagues have discharged their very difficult and complicated duties, that it would be very unfair to expect the Secretary of State to

wait, before taking decisions upon the Report of that Commission, until September, when the Assembly may have had its discussions. It would also, if I may say so, be very unfortunate for the Services concerned, because, whatever the decisions taken by the Secretary of State on this proposal, it is obvious that they should, in the interest of the Services, be taken as soon as possible, in order that the Services may know exactly where they stand. I was going to ask the noble Lord if the Government of India would not only place no obstacle in the way of, but do what they can to facilitate, a discussion on the Report of Lord Lee's Commission taking place this Session. I should imagine that this would also be to some extent in their own interests, because any representations they may make upon it are likely to carry more weight when the Secretary of State is beginning to deal with those changes than when, in September perhaps, he has already made up his mind and may have passed orders carrying out a great many decisions. I beg, therefore, to ask him that specific Question.

LORD OLIVIER: My Lords, it may be of interest to the noble Viscount if I read the text of the announcement which was made on behalf of the Government in both Houses of the Indian Legislature on May 28. It ran as follows:—

"The Report of the Royal Commission on the Superior Services in India is now in the hands of hon. members. When they have had an opportunity of perusing it, they will no doubt observe that the recommendations of the Commission are unanimous in all the main points. They cover a wide field, including Indianisation of the Services, the establishment of a Public Service Commission, the control by Ministers of the Services, which the Report recommends should be recruited provincially in the future, and the remedy of the grievances of the Services. I should point out to the House that the Report is of an urgent character, that its main recommendations are inter-dependent and that this inter-dependence was the basis of its unanimity. The House has already been assured that the Government propose to give an opportunity to the hon. members of expressing their views, but they will no doubt understand that neither the Government of India nor the Secretary of State can suspend the consideration of the Report in the meanwhile. However, if, after the hon. members have had an opportunity of examining the Report, there is any strong feeling in the House in favour of a discussion during the current Session, the Government will be glad to give an opportunity for this, and will consider what arrangements could be made."

that is, in the current Session, the May Session—

"although, of course, it will not be possible for them to express their definite views at such short notice. The hon. members will understand that the Provincial Governments are vitally interested in many of the recommendations, and their views must be obtained. While the Government are anxious to obtain the general views of the Assembly at the earliest possible date, it may be necessary for the Secretary of State to take decision on matters of urgency, and, in this connection, I must refer the House to what my predecessor said in July, 1923, and again in March, 1924. We cannot here, either as an Assembly or as a Government of India, limit the constitutional and statutory powers of the Secretary of State in this respect, and if there are matters pressed upon him by the Royal Commission which require immediate orders, then it will be necessary to recognise his power to take a decision in advance of any discussion by the Assembly. For the rest, we shall be quite prepared to allow the Assembly an opportunity of discussing the main recommendations of the Royal Commission. We shall meet any views it may advance in discussion in the usual way and shall forward its recommendations to the Secretary of State. I take this opportunity of announcing that the Secretary of State and the Government of India are of opinion that whatever measures of relief recommended by the Commission may be finally sanctioned should have effect as recommended by the Commission from April 1, 1924."

I hope very much that the Viceroy may find it possible to dispose of the discussion of this Report in the Assembly which is now being held, and I have already pressed upon the Viceroy, as strongly as I can, my sense, and that of my Council, of the urgency of dealing with the matter as quickly as possible, in view of the considerations to which the Viceroy himself has called attention. I have no doubt whatever that Lord Reading will do all he can to secure the earliest possible expression in a sufficient manner of the views of the Assembly. He knows the feeling of His Majesty's Government upon the subject, and he will, subject to the obstacles standing in his way, be disposed to press forward the matter as quickly as possible.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, I will only say in a sentence that those who sit on this Bench have listened with satisfaction to the remarks which have just fallen from the Secretary of State for India. I am glad to learn that not only are the Viceroy and the Government of India anxious to take this matter at once in India, but that those views are shared by the

Secretary of State himself. It is obviously extremely desirable that the matter should be taken in hand without delay, both because of the nature of the Report and the great disadvantage of letting the matter stand over till September, and also because, as the noble Lord pointed out, there may be matters upon which the Government of India think it necessary to act without any delay at all. If so, how desirable it is that any discussion should take place soon. Further, in view of the labours of the Commission, of which Lord Lee of Fareham was Chairman, and the urgent recommendations that the Report should be considered as a whole, that it should be treated and if possible accepted as a whole, and that the changes proposed should be initiated with as little delay as possible, it is only fair to my noble friend and his colleagues that so far as His Majesty's Government can influence that course of affairs they shall do so. Therefore, we are gratified to learn that the Secretary of State for India will exert the whole of his influence in that direction.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Wednesday, 4th June, Tuesday, 1st July,
and Monday, 7th July, 1924.*

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE BILL.* [H.L.]

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 21st July, 1924.

INDIA.

VISCOUNT PEEL had given Notice to call the attention of His Majesty's Government to the present situation in India; to ask for a full statement of policy; and to move for Papers. The noble Viscount said: My Lords, your Lordships will have observed that I have put down this Motion about affairs in India in a rather general form. The truth is that the different topics which I wish to bring before your Lordships this afternoon are so much inter-connected that it is very diffi-

cult to put a more specific question in order to get an answer from the Government. Let me state at once the three points on which I wish to address your Lordships and on which I desire to elicit, if I can, some information from the Government as to their action. The first relates to the Report of the Commission presided over by Viscount Lee of Fareham; the second, broadly speaking, is the situation in some of the Provinces at the present moment; and the third is what I may call the general constitutional situation, with special reference to the Committee which the Secretary of State for India set up to deal with that matter.

In dealing with the Report of Viscount Lee of Fareham's Commission let me, first of all, thank him very warmly for having enabled me to carry out the pledge I gave. When I was instrumental in setting up the Commission to inquire into the superior Services in India I stated that I trusted the Commission would not be of a rambling or roaming nature, but that it would be thoroughly businesslike and bring its operations to an end in the shortest possible time. I am most grateful to the noble Viscount and his colleagues for the way in which they addressed themselves to their work, with such rapidity, industry and despatch that they were able in the course of a few months in India to bring their laborious task to a termination.

But there is something more to be said on that point. Your Lordships who have studied that Report will also observe the most significant thing about the Report and a most rare occurrence nowadays in connection with Commissions—that there is no Minority Report. The proposals of the Lee Commission were unanimous, and those who are familiar with the great difficulties of the case, the divergence of the views expressed, the variety of opinions and the vast number of Papers placed before that Commission, will feel that the greatest credit is due to Viscount Lee of Fareham for having steered the Commission to a unanimous goal and avoided all the quicksands on which it might have split. It would have reduced the Report, possibly, to a useless document if there had been a series of divergent Reports on this subject. I am most grateful to him and his colleagues for the sense of compromise which has brought about this valuable Report.

* For references to India, see Index.
The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.

I do not propose to go into the details of that Report to-day. It really falls under three important heads. There is the question of the increased Indianisation of some of the Services; the Provincialisation of certain Services, when they come under the head of "Transferred Subjects" and are dealt with by Ministers in the Provinces; and a number of extremely important provisions for the improvement of the financial provision for the Services in various ways, and the security of the Services. In connection with the question of security I lay the greatest stress upon the advice as to the provision of a covenant for those who enter subsequently into the Services and for the setting up of the Public Service Commission, which it is proposed should have considerable powers both as regards recruiting and the discipline of the Services. I am sure our fellow-countrymen in India will pay great attention to those provisions which are intended to meet the medical needs of British officers in the Civil Services and their families.

Unfortunately, it happens that there is a great deal of opinion in India at the present time which is rather averse from making proper financial provision for these Services. Partly, I think, it arises from the general tendency in India—I will not say to underpay, but not to overpay their officials, whether in the public Services or in business. There is a not unnatural feeling that Indians are cheaper and that if they had completely Indianised Services they would be able to procure those men on a less expensive basis. There is, of course, the desire that more posts should be filled by Indians themselves. But besides that there are, unfortunately, some elements in India which do not desire to improve the position of these Services because they think that by their decay and the unwillingness of young men in this country to enter them the bond between this country and India might be definitely weakened.

The Services in India have had a great deal to put up with lately. There was, first, the terrible outburst of racial feeling in connection with the Gandhi agitation which, undoubtedly, diminished very much the amenities of life for officials in these Civil Services, more especially in the country districts. Moreover, they feel, and feel keenly, the uncertainty of their

future and the diminished opportunities they might have for service in India owing to constitutional changes and the rapid Indianisation of the Services to which they belong. It is to the great credit of these officials that no one has ever challenged the complete loyalty of the Services to the reforms or their determination to carry them out to the uttermost, and work most faithfully and loyally for the reforms, even though they might bring about diminished opportunities for themselves.

After all, we ought to realise how great these changes are. There is, first, the constantly moving process from being executive bodies ruling policy to Civil Services in our sense of the word, where the Minister defines policy and the Service carries it out. Moreover, they have seen, through increased Indianisation, their chances of promotion and distinction being diminished in the future. This Report accelerates that Indianisation. Your Lordships will know that as regards the rapidity of Indianisation it considerably accelerates the process which was laid down under the arrangement in 1921, and, of course, the transfer of those Services which fall under the rule of the Provinces makes a considerable cut in the area over which the All-India Services will work. Coupled with all these difficulties there is also the financial problem from which these men are suffering. I am not going into the details but I hope Viscount Lee of Fareham, who is going to speak in the debate, will say something on that subject. But the financial difficulties of these men at the present moment must be considered not alone in isolation but in combination with the general causes of disturbance to which I have alluded.

What I feel is this—and this is one of the reasons why I desire to press upon the noble Lord opposite the necessity of putting this Report into execution as rapidly as possible—that the conditions in many of the Services are so grave that, there is a fear that, if comfort is not brought to them and their position improved, there may be a considerable exodus under the rules for taking proportionate pensions, the rights to take which have been extended, I think, to the year 1930. Your Lordships will readily realise that these retirements have a very great influence upon public opinion here, and

that the reports which are brought back by the men who leave the Services in India necessarily have a great influence upon the young men who may be expected to go into those Services. Confidence must be restored, if possible. May I give an instance from my own knowledge? When I was at Balliol College, Oxford, that college was full of men who were going into the Services, and especially the Indian Civil Service. When I went down only last year to address them on some Indian subjects, I found, in that great college from which so many distinguished men have gone forth to govern India, that there were, I think, only two men who were then considering whether they should enter the Indian Civil Service. I need not remind your Lordships that you want more ability than ever and all the character that you can obtain from the young men who are going out to that work in the more arduous circumstances in which they will have to conduct their business in India.

An opportunity was to have been given, as the Secretary of State very well knows, for the discussion of these proposals in the Assembly. I very much regret that this opportunity was not taken during the recent Session. I understand that it was hoped that possibly a more favourable opportunity would be taken in September, and the noble Lord has stated—indeed, I think he has given a pledge—that he would not bring these proposals into action until that discussion had taken place. I must remind the Secretary of State of a matter which is, no doubt, present to his own mind, that the full responsibility for the protection of those Services rests upon the Secretary of State. It is a remarkable thing that this responsibility is reiterated in the Report of my noble friend Lord Lee, and that the Report advises that this protection and responsibility should still rest with the Secretary of State as of yore.

I am aware that these proposals must cost money. I believe the cost is estimated at about one and a quarter crores of rupees. I am bound to say that, in looking through the Report, I thought that the Commissioners had framed their advice with a very direct view to economy and with a very strict regard to the present financial situation in India, and that the proposals which they made for the general financial betterment of the Ser-

vices were really almost the minimum that they could have advised. I am aware that it is not easy at the present time to find money in India for public Services, but I think your Lordships will agree with me that the proper payment and proper support of the Civil Service in any country should be a first charge upon the revenue, and cannot be postponed to any other requirements.

What I am going to ask the Secretary of State is this. I am going to ask him what he is doing at the present moment to clear the ground for the carrying out of the general proposals of the Report. I do not know whether I am wrong in saying that he is in general sympathy with them, but I think it should be added that I believe that all these proposals, with the exception perhaps of some that require Provincial legislation, could be carried out by Rules, and do not require legislation, so that the delays connected with legislation do not apply to them. I think it would be of great public advantage to those Services if a declaration could be made by the Secretary of State that he is doing all that he can, and as vigorously as he can, to frame Rules and to prepare to bring these proposals into shape. I think I am right in saying that, whatever financial decisions are arrived at, they will date back to April 1, and in that way, I believe, the members of the Services will not suffer. But, on the whole case, I cannot affect to deny to your Lordships how seriously I was impressed during the time that I was Secretary of State by the difficulties which those Services had to meet and by the great importance, in the interest of the Services, of good government in India and of providing the best men from here, that something should be done to alleviate and to strengthen their position.

There is one point which I should like to mention, though it is outside the Report and was not considered by the Commission which dealt with the superior Services, and that is the position of Europeans of British domicile in the Provincial Services. These men do not possess the advantages which were given to men in the superior Services. I believe that, not only in the Government of India Despatch but also in the recommendations of the Joint Committee, it was urged that they should have the same rights as regards propor-

tionate pensions and other advantages as would be given to members of the superior Services. But in 1921, when my predecessor was in office, these men were not included, and the reason stated, I think, in another place was that the Secretary of State had a closer degree of responsibility for the superior Services than for those who were engaged in the Provincial Services. No doubt that is true, but I think it is rather a technical ground. It is not a ground at least that ought to appeal to Parliament, because, after all, the present position of these men was brought about by the direct action of Parliament in passing the Act of 1919, and, whatever the Secretary of State may say, Parliament cannot divest itself of its responsibility. I believe that this matter has recently been brought before the noble Lord opposite, and I trust that he will give it his most sympathetic consideration.

The need for capable officials in the Civil Service has certainly not been lessened by the action of the non-co-operators in the Provinces. Your Lordships may remember that in the first Provincial Elections Mr. Gandhi had his way, and that those Elections were entirely boycotted by the non-co-operators. Possibly one result of that was that, both in the Provincial Councils and in the Assembly, a great deal of good work was done, and if those Indian politicians who are declaiming against the small amount of power and authority which they have been granted under the Act of 1919, would only look at some of the results of the useful legislation in the Provinces and the Assembly, I think they would be unable to deny that a great deal of liberty is accorded to them under that constitution. Then in these recent Elections, the second Elections since the Act, a different policy was followed. There the followers of Mr. Das prevailed over those of Mr. Gandhi, and non-co-operators went in considerable numbers into these Councils and Assemblies. Of course, they entered not for the purpose of assisting and carrying on administration, but for the purpose of bringing havoc into the administration and of destroying, so far as they could, all possibility of government in those Provinces where they had considerable numbers in the Council. I may remind your Lordships that one condition for the

constitutional advance of India, as set out in the Act, is that there should be co-operation on the part of Indians, and it is rather paradoxical that these gentlemen should wish to prove their fitness for constitutional development and further powers, first, by abstaining altogether from entering the Councils and thus acquiring administrative experience, and secondly, by entering the Councils only for the purpose of trying to prevent them from acting.

I should like to illustrate what I have said by what has happened recently, both in the Central Provinces and in Bengal. Certainly no objection can be taken to the action of the Swarajists or non-co-operators on the ground of lack of thoroughness. In the Central Provinces the demands for money were rejected, and therefore, unless the Governor had used his powers, no money could have been raised at all for the purpose of carrying on the administration. In fact, the whole business of government would have been brought absolutely to a standstill, and it was necessary for the Governor to make such restoration as he could, but his powers only allowed him to restore grants on the existing scale. Therefore all improvements, all proposals for extension, and all proposals for administrative development, were thrown ruthlessly on to the scrap heap, and, generally, the Governor was forced to stereotype the position as it was when the Budget was brought in. I understand that for a time the Ministers remained in power, but later on the Assembly refused to vote their salaries, or voted merely ridiculous salaries. The result was that the Governor was forced himself to take over the work of the Transferred Subjects, and it is remarkable to note that by taking over this work the Governor was compelled to destroy that large measure of constitutional advance and freedom granted to the Provinces by enabling them to have Ministers dealing with certain subjects and responsible to their several Councils.

I am not sure, under the Act, how long this temporary conduct of affairs by the Governor can go on. It may be that he will have to continue in temporary charge of these affairs until there is some change of mind among the Swarajists, of which I am afraid at the present moment there is little hope, or until the people them-

selves are so disgusted by this travesty of government that he is able to dissolve the Council and perhaps obtain a wiser-minded Council. I should like to learn from the noble Lord opposite what will be the position of the Governor, because I do not know exactly how to construe the meaning of the word "temporary." I understand that only for a certain time can he carry on the administration. It may be that he will have to have recourse to the Secretary of State and the Governor-General in Council, and that the Transferred Subjects will have to be re-transferred and made Reserved Subjects, which, anyhow for a time, would place the whole administration under the Governor and Executive Council. That, of course, is a strong step, but it might be necessary if this chaotic administration, or absence of administration, in the Provinces continues. I should like to know whether the noble Lord contemplates that some such step will be necessary in the near future.

I pass to the Province of Bengal. In Bengal another situation arose, because not the whole of the Budget but only certain Votes were refused, and ridiculous salaries were voted for Ministers—two rupees per month, or something equally grotesque. There the Governor did not restore the Votes, but he proceeded to act in a perfectly constitutional manner. He gave notice to a large number of surgeons and assistant-surgeons—gave them three months' notice—and prorogued the Council, no doubt in the hope that the Swarajists would come to a better mind when they saw the necessary results of their action, and possibly when some of these gentlemen who were doing without their salaries would make themselves extremely unpleasant to their representatives. These Votes were attempted to be re-submitted to the Council, but the Swarajists had another string to their bow, and brought an injunction in the Courts asking that the Governor be restrained from putting these Votes before the Council. The Council was adjourned, and I should like the noble Lord to explain what the situation is, how he proposes to deal with it, and how he proposes to support the Governor of Bengal in his efforts to continue good administration in that Province.

In connection with the position in Bengal I want to call the noble Lord's
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attention, and the attention of your Lordships, to a very remarkable statement made by Mr. C. R. Das. There was a resolution passed at a meeting at Serajganj, in Bengal, which, while condemning murder, praised the patriotism of the murderer of Mr. Day, the man who was murdered in mistake for a police officer in the open streets of Calcutta. Your Lordships will realise that praising the patriotism of a murderer of that kind might have a very grave effect upon a certain section of the youth of Bengal, more especially as the murderer had been having dealings with a certain revolutionary gang. But this action of Mr. C. R. Das was followed by another statement in his paper *Forward*, which repeated what I may call the same offence. I might call attention to the fact that Mr. C. R. Das is a man of importance. He is mayor of Calcutta and was even offered office by Lord Lytton after the last Election. I hope that any proceedings which His Majesty's Government may think of taking against Mr. Das will not be suspended merely because he is a man of importance, and that action will not only be taken against persons who are of less importance and notoriety. The only reply on the subject which was given in another place is a very remarkable one indeed. It said that Mr. Gandhi disapproved of the murder. Exactly what that had to do with it I do not know, unless it is suggested that Mr. Gandhi is the keeper of the Government's conscience and that, he having disapproved of the murder, the Government is acquitted of any further action.

I should like further to ask one question of the noble Lord about events in the Punjab. We have discussed previously in this House problems brought up by the Akali movement and I should like to ask whether the noble Lord can tell us how the Government proposes to deal with that problem. I need hardly say I ask that question with the fullest confidence in the ability, energy and judgment of Sir Malcolm Hailey, the present Governor, but these matters have been long in issue, and I should like to know if the Secretary of State will tell us why it was that the Committee under General Birdwood failed to make peace and to restore order among the recalcitrant Sikhs. Was one of the reasons why it failed that they

made it a condition of assenting to their proposals that the Maharajah of Nabha, who was, in circumstances familiar to your Lordships, dispossessed of his Government, should be restored to that State?

One incident I should like to refer to because it is of great interest as showing the falsehood of many of those accusations brought against our rule in India, implying that Indian finance is wrested and diverted from its proper aim in the interests of either British manufacturers or British business. I think the Secretary of State, as your Lordships may have observed, has already assented to an Act placing heavy duties upon steel and other iron products imported into India, and I believe that the Government of India reserve the right under the Act, if those duties are not high enough, of themselves increasing them by executive order. In that case there has, I believe, been no protest made, or no indignation shown by those very interests in this country which might be expected to suffer from those high duties. Moreover, it must have been a trial for the Labour Government which, I understand, is a Free Trade Government, to have assented to that high degree of Protection, because it is Protection in its most acute form. There are very few businesses in India which deal with steel, and whose competition among themselves might have reduced the price, so that the probability is that the increased price will fall mainly upon the consumer. And I think it is generally understood that that Protection was put on, not for many businesses, but for one only, the great Tann industry, in which a great deal of Indian money is invested.

I am sorry that I cannot claim that the return for that action has been a very ready one in Indian quarters. Last October the Municipality of Bombay passed a Resolution for the general boycott of British goods. Not very long ago it was proposed in that Council that that Resolution should be rescinded; unfortunately, it was not rescinded, but the consideration of it was postponed *sine die*. Another instance of the same unfortunate tendency that I have observed is that very recently the Allahabad Municipal Board advertised for tenders for stores for the use of the municipal workshops in 1924-1925, and on the tender was written: "Continental and American manufac-

tured articles should be distinctly shown as they will be preferred." I very much regret that there is not a little more reciprocity between India and ourselves in these matters.

I may now approach the general subject with which I have to deal; that is to say, the movement for constitutional change in India. I have often heard it said by prominent Indians: "You have promised us self-government or Home Rule; why do you not carry it out at once?" I have often asked them where that particular promise was definitely enshrined. I have looked at the Government of India Act, 1919, and I find that there this so-called promise is hedged about by very particular conditions. First of all it is stated in the Preamble that

"... the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples."

And it goes on—

"And whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility . . ."

The actions in the Provinces which I have recited do not show a very great response, I am bound to say, to that suggestion.

But, further than that, in Section 41 it is laid down that at the expiration of ten years after the passing of the Act, with the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament, there shall be a Commission sent out. What has that Commission to do? It has to report upon matters connected with the institutions of British India, and these are the words of the section:—

"... the Commission shall report as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify, or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing therein."

I submit, therefore, that the broad statement that in that Act self-government was promised to India must be taken with a great deal of qualification.

I should like to refer in this connection—because it bears upon the interrogation which I wish to put to the Secretary of State—to some Resolutions which, I

believe, have been presented to the India Office, and signed by Mr. Sastri and other prominent Indians, who are not supposed, at any rate, to represent the extreme Swarajist view. They first of all claim that India should draft her own Constitution—thereby, I think, going directly contrary to the Act of 1919. Their proposals shortly are that the central civil government of the Viceroy shall be carried on by the Viceroy, with a Cabinet responsible to the Indian Legislature, the defence of the country and foreign affairs remaining in the hands of the Viceroy until the responsible Government of India is ready to take them over. It is also suggested that a Commission should be sent out to India in the coming autumn with wide terms of reference. I am not sure what that Commission would do, because, if India itself should draft its own Constitution, I presume that the duty of that Commission would only be to register the Constitution so drafted.

These are some of the representations and some of the influences which are now being brought to bear upon the Secretary of State, and it is in the light of representations of that kind that I want to examine the exact procedure that has been followed by the Secretary of State as regards the Committees that he has set up in India. I should like to say, before coming to that, however, that there are a great many objections to having every ten years a Commission for the purpose of examining, inquiring into, and rooting up the working of the Constitution in India. There is one great advantage that might come out of it, and that is that within those ten years you should be free from constitutional agitation in India, and the people in India should be ready to carry on the administration free from these disturbing constitutional agitations which, we know, are so troublesome both in this country and in India. But if during those ten years, and even shortly after the first Legislative Assembly, you are to be again brought into a turmoil of constitutional action you get the worst of both worlds.

Committees have been set up by the Secretary of State—first of all, one of officials and then one with non-officials added, with a wider reference, for inquiring into the working of the machinery of the Act and into the defects

which there may be in the working of that machinery. I should like to know, first of all, what was the particular experience and what were the particular defects which led the noble Lord to set up this machinery. It was only last year that I made the suggestion to the Viceroy, which he readily accepted, that with a view of having a great body of experience collected together before the Commission went out—which in the ordinary course would be in the year 1930—he should have yearly Reports from the different Provinces as to the working of the Constitution in those Provinces. I do not know whether those first Reports have shown any serious defects in the working of the Constitution, but it is rather rapid, I think, after only three years, to set up a Committee of Inquiry into those defects. I should like to know from the Secretary of State what are the leading defects which caused him either to suggest himself, or to assent to proposals from the Government of India, to set up that particular Committee.

Perhaps he would be good enough to define a little later what are “defects” in the working of the Constitution. It is not, so far as I know, a term of art. It is a vague term which might be very generally interpreted. For instance, there are a great many persons who think the diarchy is a defect of the Constitution. But, after all, there are powers within the Rules, as the noble Lord knows, to make all the Reserved Subjects in the Provinces Transferred Subjects simply by action taken under the Rules and without legislation. Again, it came before me very forcibly many times during my tenure at the India Office that the Government of India thought that very serious defects in the Constitution lay in the fact that the Secretary of State for India had too much control over the Government of India. Under the Rules a great deal of power can be transferred to the Government of India and the Viceroy, and I should like to know whether those are considered to be defects in the machinery, or really something wider. In regard to the transfer of powers from the Secretary of State to the Viceroy, the loosening of the control of the Government of India over the Provinces and in many ways a great deal can be done under the Rules which would so alter the balance of the

existing Constitution that it could be almost described as a new one.

I am aware that in the reference that has been given to this Committee the Secretary of State has tried to guard himself by saying that these changes should be within the structure of the Constitution; but a Constitution is a very, very fluid thing. I think it would be very difficult to define, for instance, what our Constitution is. It is more easy to define what a written Constitution is. There are very wide limits, it seems to me, within which that Committee might work. I want to ask this further question. I was examining the speeches which were made by Sir Malcolm Hailey, before he took over the Governorship of the Punjab, in the Assembly with the concurrence, of course, of the Secretary of State, and which were quoted the other day by the Under-Secretary in another place, because not only is this Committee operating with a wide reference, but it appears that it may be only a preliminary to even wider action on the part of the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

First of all, we go outside the Rules, and Sir Malcolm says—

"It may even be . . . that the Inquiry may show that some changes are required in the structure of the Act in order to rectify the definite and ascertained defects experienced in the actual working."

In his speech, ten days later, he went further and said—

"Before His Majesty's Government are able to consider the question of amending the Constitution, as distinct from such amendment of the Act as may be required to rectify any administrative imperfections, there must be full investigation of any defects or difficulties which may have arisen . . ."

At the end he states that—

" . . . if our inquiries show that no advance is possible without amending the Constitution then the question of advance must be left as an entirely open and separate issue upon which the Government is in no way committed."

I want to call attention to two points in that speech. The first is that it seems to be suggested that this Inquiry may be followed, when it has reported, by some other and wider Inquiry into the Constitution itself. I am very anxious to press for an answer from the noble Lord as to what this further Inquiry is which he seems to contemplate.

The last of the statements made says that the problem is to be an "open and separate issue." How can it be an open and separate issue? You will have had an Inquiry which shows that there are certain defects in the working of the Constitution which are more than defects in the working and which cannot be remedied by matters under the Rules. He calls it an open and separate question, but is it not obvious that the question must be prejudiced to some extent? There would be plenty of people who would press him to a further line of action when this Committee of Inquiry had decided that there were defects which were not remediable under the Rules.

Why I have laid so much stress upon that is this. I may be wrong but, watching carefully the operation of His Majesty's Government, they seem to me really to be slipping from one position to another. They may very easily arrive at a situation in which they will, as it were, get behind the Act of Parliament which says that these constitutional changes and advances are not to be made without investigation conducted by a Commission set up by Parliament. You really are or might be transferring to the Indian Assembly that right of setting up its own Constitution which is claimed by these gentlemen who have sent their report to the Secretary of State, but which is clearly not admitted in any way by the Act setting up the existing Constitution. Now possibly some colour is given to my interpretation of this by the fact that it is said that Mr. Ginha laid stress upon these particular passages which I have quoted, that Mr. Ginha accepted a position on this Committee, and that he only accepted a position on the Committee on the understanding that there was to be some wider constitutional investigation which was to follow the narrower operations of this Committee. I should be much obliged if the noble Lord is able to dispel that suggestion that has been made, because, after all, we want to come to an issue upon this point.

The Secretary of State has declared that the Swarajists are aiming at the same matter as we are ourselves and that they are the Constitutional Opposition. Does he, therefore, admit their claim that they shall be allowed now to draw up their own Constitution in India, or does he stand by the operations of

the Act of 1919 under which this matter is to be settled in its own time by Parliament and by a Commission sent out to advise the Government of the time? I have always deeply regretted that the Indian politicians have not addressed themselves more vigorously to the work of carrying out the present Constitution. If they had diverted one-tenth of the energy they have shown in standing out of the Constitution, obstructing that Constitution and making the working of it difficult, India would now be far more advanced than it is at present on the road to constitutional reform and change.

I have always held, as one having to watch the working of it very closely for two years or more, that it really was not at all certain that this Constitution, framed very largely on Western models, would be the most suitable for constitutional development in India. Therefore I thought that it was most important that you should have a quiet, orderly development in order that those watching the growth and development of the Constitution by custom and usage should see in what direction Indian thought and Indian feeling most particularly tended. But you have had the whole thing thrown into the melting pot and destroyed by this non-co-operation, and there is no possibility of working the Constitution in the way it should be worked in order that these developments may be observed and ascertained. It always strikes me rather as a paradox that the people who are most opposed to the infiltration of Western ideas, and who are asserting that the present movement in India is largely due to opposition on the part of the East to these Western ideas, are the very people who wish to drink most deeply of those ideas, and who are only complaining because larger instalments of Western institutions and Western political ideas are not more freely granted to the people of India.

I have had a great many very interesting conversations with prominent Indian politicians, and I should like to say any personal relations that I have had with Indians have always been of the most agreeable kind, but I have been very much struck by the fact that so few of them were willing to realise the great inherent difficulties of a democratic development in India. I have spoken

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very often to people of both the Moslem and Hindu faiths of the Moplah disturbances, and of the troubles in Calcutta, Delhi and elsewhere, as symptoms of the strong feeling that there is between these communities, and the answer usually was this: "Why, they are little more than the feeling between Protestant and Catholic in your own country, and as soon as we have Home Rule you will see that all these things will disappear." I have also put to them the suggestion that probably a great deal of the feeling and the disturbance among Moslems nowadays in India, now that the difficulties over Turkey have been settled, are due to the fact that many of these Moslems are apt to regard Hindu Home Rule as really Hindu Rule, but that suggestion also has always been brushed aside. I have asked them whether difficulties of caste would not be an obstacle in the way of democratic government in our sense. Again I was told: "Oh no, caste is rapidly melting away, and you find that these difficulties are disappearing." I said: "How, with these difficulties, will you defend yourselves and build up a homogeneous Army?" I was told again: "There is no difficulty in that at all. As soon as Home Rule is set up in India these difficulties will disappear and these Armies will be established."

As for myself, I find it very difficult to believe that India really can skip all the experience and training that have been found necessary for the setting up of democratic rule in other countries. There are very strange rewritings of history nowadays. I suppose no one would try to establish that the Mogul rule in India was democratic, and that under that rule, the people obtained useful lessons in democratic government. I submit to the Secretary of State and to your Lordships that it would really be a terrible thing if, by hastening the pace too much—if, by undue precipitancy—we were to wreck or bring disaster to this difficult constitutional development in India. It would be very dangerous if you were to pour too quickly the heady wine of our Western institutions into the ancient framework of a very old civilisation like that of India. Anyhow, whatever happens, and if failure does come through undue precipitancy, your Lordships may rest assured that blame will not attach to those Indians who are anxious to increase their consti-

tutional development, but will be borne and laid in full measure on the shoulders of the people and Government of this country.

Moved, That an Humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers with reference to the present situation in India.—(*Viscount Peel.*)

VISCOUNT LEE OF FAREHAM: My Lords, I do not often trouble your Lordships' House, and if I have to make this afternoon a somewhat substantial draught upon your patience it is only because I am constrained to do so by the deep and, as I think, natural anxiety that I feel with regard to the fate of the labours of the Commission over which I had the honour to preside, and to which my noble friend Lord Peel has made such generous reference. I can assure the Secretary of State and His Majesty's Government that in any remarks which I make I am actuated by no captious or hostile spirit. That, I think, is sufficiently shown by the fact that I have preserved, at any rate for four months, an unbroken silence in public with regard to this matter, which to me appears one of considerable urgency, but I must point out that on the other hand His Majesty's Government, so far as their definite intentions are concerned, have preserved an equally unbroken silence. Meanwhile, the only reports which reach us from India with regard to the action that is likely to be taken are by no means reassuring.

I will say at once that so far as theoretical acceptance of the main recommendations of the Commission are concerned I have no cause for complaint. On a previous occasion in your Lordships' House, on June 3, a statement was read out by the Secretary of State apparently entirely favourable to the main conclusions of the Commission, and referring in particular to an announcement made in the Assembly at Delhi in which first of all attention was drawn to the urgency of the matters dealt with by the Report, and, secondly, emphasis was laid upon the power of the Secretary of State to take a decision in advance of any discussion by the Assembly in any matters which in his view were of an urgent character. I assume that the attitude taken up by the Government on that occasion represents their mind to-day, but I feel bound to ask what has become of the point of urgency upon which stress

was laid on the previous occasion, and the particular reservation reasserting the powers of the Secretary of State to take action in advance of the discussion in the Assembly?

That, as pointed out by my noble friend Lord Peel, is inherent in the constitutional position of the Secretary of State. It was emphasised not less by him than it was, I think, by the noble Lord who is now Secretary of State for India. All I wish to point out at the moment is that not merely has no action been taken, but there has been a Parliamentary claim that no action—or no decision I think was the phrase—on questions of principle or policy should be taken until after the discussions in the Assembly in September. I am not clear as to what questions of policy and principle mean in that connection, or whether that debars the Secretary of State from taking any action upon matters which are not really matters of principle or of policy, but practical questions, such as, for example, the grant of passages to the Services. It will be obvious that in a question like that arrangements have to be made a long time beforehand with the individuals concerned and the shipping companies, as it is almost impossible to get a passage from India to England in any given winter if you defer arrangements until the last moment. I trust that this is not a question of policy or principle which it is considered cannot be dealt with in advance by the Secretary of State. In any case a pledge has been given, and a pledge given by His Majesty's Government must be observed. Therefore, I have no more to say on that point, except that I trust that the noble Viscount is correct when he said that he hoped the Secretary of State and the Government of India were getting ready, getting all their Committees set up and the preliminaries settled, so as to enable them to take action immediately after the discussion has taken place in the Assembly and thus ensure that there will be no further delay.

After the experiences I had in India I feel bound to sound a note of warning with regard to the effect upon the morale and efficiency of the Services, still more on their recruitment and the retirements which are taking place, if this matter is unduly delayed and action is not ultimately taken. I can assure your Lordships that there is none of that

pathetic contentment in the Services in India which Mr. Montagu detected when he was Secretary of State and, I understand, deplored in the Indian population. On the contrary, there is a very lively discontent and an ever-deepening anxiety with regard to the present and future position of the Services. After hearing the case fully stated there is, I think, considerable excuse for their attitude of mind in this matter. After all, there has been no great hurry, no indecent haste, in dealing with their grievances, and that is an additional reason why I feel justified in pressing His Majesty's Government to pay heed to the unanimous and emphatic declaration of the whole Commission, Indian and British members alike, that the Report should be accepted as a whole, and acted upon without delay.

May I recall the past history of this question of the grievances of the Services in India? It is not a new thing at all. It is now some twelve years since the need for redressing these grievances was publicly recognised by the appointment of the Islington Commission. It was appointed at the end of 1912, sat for two and a half years, and then, owing to the circumstances of the war, its Report was not completed and presented until five years after it first sat. And it was not until seven years from the time it was appointed that any Orders based upon its recommendations were passed. By the mere passage of time and changed conditions most of its recommendations became entirely obsolete. Then ensued three more years during which a very leisurely, and in some cases dilatory, examination was made by various Governments in India. Finally, in February, 1922, a deputation was received by the Viceroy, the net result of which was that it was not denied that the Services had made out a case for redress but it was pointed out that in the then existing financial situation in India it was impossible to do anything for them.

It was a mere *non possumus*, and whether it was justified or not I ask your Lordships to consider how this situation strikes these great Services in India. They are told that there is no money available to meet their urgent needs, and simultaneously they see millions being spent—I do not know how much the latest estimate is—upon the creation of a new Capital, new executive offices, and

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new Departments, in which these civil servants are to work. In effect, they are told: "We cannot afford to meet your grievances because we are spending all the money on erecting these palatial buildings in which you are to work." It strikes them with an irony which is apt to turn to bitterness. There is no doubt that their patience and *morale* had reached almost breaking point when the Royal Commission over which I presided was appointed. It was anticipated by some that the labours of that Commission would not be completed in less than two years, but the members of the Commission felt that the case was so urgent that we devoted all our energies to conclude our Inquiry with all possible speed, and we produced, as the noble Viscount has said, a unanimous Report in six months.

The position to-day, apparently, is that more time is required for consideration—the rest is silence. I have pointed out that twelve years have been consumed in examination of this question and that meanwhile nothing practically has been done to implement the recommendation made by the Montagu-Chelmsford Report that something ought to be done—I think it said immediately—to restore the pay of the Services to something like the attractions it presented twenty years ago. Nothing has been done and, as a result—no one regrets it more than I do—there has undoubtedly developed a feeling of discontent based upon not merely lack of security but also, I am afraid, in many cases, lack of support, on the top of financial harassments which any one who will take the trouble to read the Report of the Commission will see are of a most real character. I do not know whether your Lordships realise that the Services in India, unlike the Services at home, received no war bonus, no recognition of changed prices as a result of the war, and that therefore, they are in an immeasurably worse position than the Services at home, whose position, in fact, has been considerably improved. This has, as it must have, a most demoralising effect upon the Services, and one which it must be in the interests of India, no less than of the British Empire as a whole, to remove.

On the other side, there is a great deal of political feeling amongst Indians in India that Indianisation and Provincialisation are not proceeding as rapidly as the

pledges of the British Parliament and Government would have led them to hope. I do not know how many times I heard the charge that the British were holding back, that they were not carrying out their pledges and that they never would carry them out except as the result of force and agitation. I believe that to be profoundly untrue, but in any case the Report of the Commission sought to allay both these causes of unrest and dissatisfaction, so far as they appeared to be reasonable and legitimate, and we feel that these are the chief and sufficient reasons why the Report should be brought into operation without further delay.

The position to-day is one of such suspense, not only for present members but for possible members of the Services, that recruitment has practically dried up at the Universities and schools, whereas a few years ago—certainly in my day—the Indian Civil Service was looked upon as the blue riband of all the public Services. It was the thing for which the best intellects that we had in our public schools and Universities competed with the utmost closeness. Now, we find that even the Indian Civil Service itself is looked at askance, and candidates are not coming forward. Meanwhile, a most regrettable exodus is going on at the top among some of the best men in the Services, who feel that the present financial conditions are so intolerable that they can remain no longer. I see that my noble friend Lord Inchcape is present, and I should like to ask him, if he is taking part in this debate, whether he has found it possible in his many great businesses in India to enlist young men of the requisite stamp upon terms no more favourable than those which were offered before the war. It will be obvious from the Report that enormously higher terms are now being offered in the business world, and unless some great change has come over my noble friend I cannot think that he is actuated in this matter by mere sentimental philanthropy. The present position is, as it seems to me, deplorable, and must be alleviated, unless we are prepared to say that we are going to step out of our responsibility in India and haul down the flag. There is at this moment an urgent need for a recruiting campaign for the Services, a campaign in which I should greatly like to be able to take part; and

I shall certainly offer my services in that respect if and when the recommendations of the Royal Commission are adopted. But, frankly, I cannot in the meanwhile conscientiously take part in recruitment, and I know that many others are in the same case.

I do not wish to go into details, and I have no desire on this occasion to enlarge upon the particular recommendations of the Report. It is reasonably brief and, I hope, speaks for itself. What I am anxious to do is to try to elicit from the Secretary of State, speaking on behalf of the Government of India also, what is the exact position, and to impress upon them, as I am endeavouring to do, the dangers which result from delay. I am not making any criticism, I am imputing no blame to any one, and I am not suggesting that the delay occurs more on this side than in Simla, or *vice versa*. I assume that both Governments are in the closest possible consultation, and that any responsibility which is assumed is a mutual one. But I feel bound to say, in passing, that the normal working of Government machinery in India is of a peculiarly deliberate character. I speak only as one who has had something to do with administration in this country, but I am bound to say that I was startled almost out of belief when I found that distinguished gentlemen in the position of Cabinet Ministers in India have no private secretaries, that they answer their own telephones and that the business of minute writing has reached such a pitch that the unfortunate officials, like the babes in the wood, are almost smothered by the constant stream of descending files. How it is possible under those conditions to deal expeditiously with these serious matters I am quite unable to understand. That may possibly account for some of the past delays in dealing with these matters, but it can hardly cover the present position.

I wish to suggest to your Lordships that there is very little that is new in the Report of the Royal Commission. After all, the questions with which it deals have been examined and re-examined, have been discussed and re-discussed *ad nauseam* for a decade, and what is wanted now is that someone will deliver judgment, now that the jury, in the shape of the Commission, has rendered its verdict. What I am anxious to discover

is what it is that stands in the way. I am aware that a pledge has been given that there must be discussion in the Assembly and the Legislatures, and in theory I entirely agree that this is the proper and constitutional procedure. If there were any reasonable prospect of the present majorities in the Assembly, and in the Legislatures, for instance, of the Central Provinces and Bengal, giving fair and reasoned attention to this matter, I should not demur to the delay.

But we must face the facts which have been disclosed by my noble friend Lord Peel in his speech this afternoon, and we must take seriously the position which was developing in the most intense form before the very eyes of the Commission whilst it was in India. This throwing out of the Budget, this refusal to vote the salaries of Ministers, and all these extreme illustrations of non-co-operation, took place under our very eyes, and it was clear that they were actuated by hostility to the Constitution, and a desire to make government impossible and to embarrass the Administration in every possible way.

Are these the tribunals, in their present mood, to which the findings of the Commission and the fate of the Services are to be submitted? Can there be any possible doubt as to what the result will be? Is it likely that majorities which have thrown out the Budget, and refused to vote the salaries of Ministers, and done so with the avowed object of wrecking the Constitution, are now going to say: "Ah, now let us do the generous thing by the European Services?" That requires an amount of faith in the good intentions of these bodies which I am frankly unable to understand. If I am justified in these forebodings, I feel bound to ask the Government what its policy really is. I can understand a policy of evacuation; I can understand a policy of what is commonly called keeping the flag flying; but I cannot understand a policy of maintaining the Constitution and the position in India with the help of Services which are discredited and discouraged, ill-paid, and suffering from acute financial anxiety.

I referred just now to the high aspirations of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report in this connection, and much stronger language was used subsequently by the then supreme head of the Services in India, Lord Chelmsford, when Viceroy. The language which he used

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was so classic and so important that I feel bound to quote one or two passages from it. When speaking in the Legislative Assembly on February 6, 1919, he said:

"The Services of India have just come through a long period of exceptional strain. . . . But they have risen superior to all these things, and as Viceroy I am proud and glad to acknowledge on behalf of my Government the part they have played in keeping India contented and quiet, and in helping to win the war. And now the war is over, and they seem to see before them difficulties and sacrifices greater still. I want the Services to know that my Government and I are fully cognisant and deeply appreciative of all these things."

He went on to say:—

"And government, believe me, is not the simple thing that it may sometimes seem. The help of the Services trained, efficient, impartial, with their high standards of duty, of character, of the public interest, is absolutely essential if this vast experiment is to succeed. We cannot afford and we do not mean to lose them until India acquires, what she has not got at present, something approximately as good to put in their place."

Now mark these words:—

"The Secretary of State and I have declared our intention to protect the Services in the defence of their rights and the discharge of their duties. I see that apprehensions have been aroused by the general character of this phraseology. Let me now, speaking for myself and my Government, endeavour to give precision to the undertaking. In the first place as regards their pay and pensions. I propose that the pay, pensions, leave and conditions of service generally of the Services recruited from England shall be guaranteed at least by statutory orders of the Secretary of State, which no authority in India will have power to disregard or vary."

He concluded his remarks under this head by saying:—

"I will merely add that the Government of India will always regard this question of the fair treatment of the Services as one of the cardinal tests by which our great experiment will be judged."

That was the attitude of the Government of India at that time. I cannot but believe that it must be the attitude of the Government of India to-day, and certainly it must be the attitude of any Cabinet of which Lord Chelmsford himself remains a member.

The position, as I understand it, remains unchanged. The Secretary of State is still responsible, the last resort of the Services. That was recognised by the Commission, and it was the deliberate policy of both the British and Indian

members of the Commission that in the last resort, and only in the last resort, that power should be exercised by the Secretary of State, because the Commission felt that it would have been dishonourable on our part to put before the Services alleviations of their grievances which were of an unreal or possibly illusory character. We were convinced that the future of India, and the success of the reforms, depended upon a right solution of this problem of the Services. It was not our business—and I hope we kept within the limits of our terms of reference—to revise the Constitution, but it was our business, we considered, to try to make it work and that was the main-spring of all our recommendations, behind which there was no kind of *arrière pensée*. If the balanced and honourable compromise which our recommendations represented was not upset, we felt that the result would be to give reasonable stability and contentment to the Services, and without those things no reforms, no constitution, and no scheme which could be devised for the Government of India, could possibly succeed. I go further and state my belief that unless the *morale* and contentment of the Services be restored, it will be the first step on the road to our losing India altogether.

I have only this to say in conclusion, that I do ask you to believe that in this matter of pressing for the adoption of the Report of the Commission neither I, nor any of my late colleagues, is actuated by any feeling of *amour propre*. If I may be allowed to paraphrase the Geddes Report, we were men of good will and our unanimity was the fruit of conviction. We felt, in addition, that it might be a good omen for the future of India that a mixed Commission of Englishmen and Indians, in a matter so highly controversial, raising all kinds of feelings, racial and otherwise, should have been able to show themselves united and co-operating in the common cause of Indian progress. We started with no illusion or idea that we should get success in our work or credit for what we attempted to do. Speaking for myself, I have no Indian past and certainly have no Indian future, but I strove throughout to maintain a balanced mind and to give an impartial verdict. I only wish to add that I believe this is a fleeting opportunity, unique in many ways, and I implore His Majesty's

Government and the Government of India to seize it. I do not believe it can ever occur again, and I give this as my deliberate view, after the most anxious consideration of the whole position, that after all the past history, unless the Report of the Commission is accepted as a whole the Commission will have more than failed, because it will have stirred up feelings and produced a state of affairs worse than that which it set out to remedy. Against such a *dénouement* as that, with all its disastrous consequences, I feel it my duty this afternoon to utter the most solemn warning in my power, and I trust my words may carry some conviction.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, I realise that other noble Lords desire to take part in this debate, and I greatly regret that the advanced hour makes it necessary that, in fairness, I should give my reply at this moment to the noble Viscount, because the noble Viscount has asked me for a full statement of policy. He has given me a good many subjects on which he requires categorical replies. It must necessarily take me so long to give a full statement that if I were to defer it until after we had heard the other noble Lords who desire to speak there would be really no time for me to receive that advice and criticism on my statement which I so value from the noble Marquess opposite.

In the first place, I should like to thank the noble Viscount, Lord Peel, for having relieved me of part of my task by the very grateful recognition which he has made of the work done by the noble Viscount, Lord Lee of Fareham. I am also very grateful to the noble Viscount for placing before the House so eloquently and so feelingly the case of the Civil Services which he deals with in his Report. I associate myself entirely with all that he has said with regard to the claims of those Services to the consideration which he has tried to secure that they shall be accorded. So fully do I do so that I desire as succinctly as I can to review the position out of which the Report of Lord Lee's Commission arises.

The case for endeavouring to redress the diminution of income from which public servants in India have suffered during recent years is briefly but cogently stated in the fifth chapter of the Report

of Lord Lee's Committee. The facts are not in dispute. Two years before the war a comprehensive Inquiry had been held into the conditions of all the Indian Services by a Royal Commission under the presidency of the noble Lord, Lord Islington. The present Prime Minister and Mr. H. A. L. Fisher were also members. Mr. Gokhale, who died before the Commission reported, was the most eminent Indian representative. The local investigation had been completed—it took nearly two years and every Province in India was visited—but before the Commission's conclusions could be put into operation the war broke out and the Indian Government, faced with more urgent responsibilities, had perforce to let action on the Report stand over. The delay, though quite unavoidable, was the more to be regretted because the last previous general Inquiry into the Indian Public Services had been held over thirty years before, and in the meantime entirely new Services, such as the Agricultural and Veterinary Services, had come into existence.

During the period of the war the need for financial relief to the Services became more acutely felt. Prices rose and officers stayed on in the Service who would otherwise have retired under the age limit. The rate of promotion was thus retarded and the junior ranks of the Services suffered accordingly. On the other hand, many of the younger members joined the fighting forces. In the Indian Army Reserve of Officers, the branch of the Service to which civilian Indian officials were naturally assigned, casualties were heavy and this war wastage, coupled with the inevitable shortage of recruits in the period immediately following the Armistice, added to the difficulties of recruiting the Services, already seriously affected by the reduction in the value of the emoluments offered.

It is necessary to remember, as the noble Viscount, Lord Lee, has mentioned, that no general scheme of temporary relief by way of war bonus, such as had been granted to the Home Service and most of the Colonial Services, was applied in India. This was because the Report of Lord Islington's Committee, which was still awaiting action, had established beyond question the necessity for a revision of the permanent scale of pay of the principal Services. It was

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clear from it that no system of temporary bonuses would suffice. Immediately after the Armistice the problem was taken up with all possible promptitude. New scales of pay, as well as new leave and pension rules, were settled and promulgated in 1919 and 1920 on the basis of the Islington Commission's recommendations, supplemented in some respects by those of Mr. Montagu and the noble Viscount, Lord Chelmsford, whose Report on Constitutional Reform had also touched on Civil Service grievances.

Generally speaking, these new scales of pay fixed in 1919 represented a substantial improvement when expressed in terms of percentages, but—and this is the outstanding fact and one that still governs the situation—the increases of pay did not, indeed could not, keep pace with the rise in the cost of living in India. The object of the Indian Government and of the India Office was that something should be done "towards restoring the real pay of the existing Services to the level which proved effective twenty years ago." This object was not attained. The rise in the cost of living for a European in India between 1914 and 1923 amounted to at least 60 per cent. No Service received an increase even approaching that figure. The average increase, taking a man's pay throughout his period of service, was round about 20 per cent. In the case of the Indian Civil Service, whose pay had been relatively high before the war, the increase was less than 10 per cent.

There are circumstances incidental to service in India that make the rise in the cost of living exceptionally burdensome to officers of European domicile, and especially to those who are married and have families; for instance, the necessity of coming home on leave periodically in order to keep fit, and of sending their children home for education. Thus the provision of passages, the cost of which, even by the cheapest class, nearly doubled between 1914 and 1921 and still rules very high, is a crushing burden to a married officer with a family. Again, the officer working in the plains of India must often send his wife and family, during the hot weather, into the hills, and when the children are of school age an officer has, in addition, to remit considerable sums for their education in this country. Further, in 1919, when the new scales of

pay were fixed, the official exchange of the rupee was 2s. It had been considerably higher and it was expected that it would remain at or about that figure. It fell to 1s. 4d., thereby imposing on all officers who had to remit to this country an additional remittance of rupees of 50 per cent. as compared with that which they had to make when their salaries were fixed.

The brief recapitulation of these facts, that the cost of living had greatly increased, that the salaries had not been increased, that the cost of passages and remittances had all greatly increased, proves, I think, a case for the liberal treatment of the Indian Services which no reasonable or just-minded man who gives his attention to it impartially could possibly repudiate. On the basis of that situation Lord Lee's Commission was appointed and went to India. It has made recommendations which I need not go into. In addition to the very admirable and useful recommendation on which the noble Viscount, Lord Peel, has laid emphasis—the provision for placing the recruiting of the Services on a better basis and for establishing a public Service Commission—it also made recommendations with regard to pay. Here I should like to congratulate the noble Viscount, Lord Lee, upon the fact, for which he very justly took credit to his Commission, that it was a unanimous report of both the Indian and English members.

They made recommendations which, so far as I can form any judgment upon them, I am bound to say seem to me to be extremely moderate, in satisfaction of what I have called the just and reasonable claims of Indian civilians. First of all, what was recommended with regard to conditions of Service was an improvement in the pay of the Indian Police Service destined to bring it more nearly to the level of the other All-India Services other than the Indian Civil Service. Secondly, they recommend improvements in the pay of the All-India Services generally and of Services comparable with them. These are an increase of 50 rupees a month from the age when an officer may be expected to marry. Consideration was given to the fact that possibly the younger members of the Services were highly paid in comparison with the older members of the Services who had

to meet these increased charges of which I have spoken. The right to remit all overseas pay to this country at the special rate of 2s. to the rupee was also recommended. With the rupee at 1s. 4d. these two concessions may be taken from the twelfth year of service to be equivalent to about 200 rupees a month, or £160 a year addition to salaries. The increase is less for officers of less than twelve years' service.

In addition to this, recommendations were made for the acceleration of the Indianisation of the Services, thus meeting what it is perhaps very necessary to meet in view of the check to English recruiting, the demand of the Indians for the recruiting of their own nationals in an accelerated degree. Those are the recommendations which the noble Viscount, Lord Lee, and his colleagues are satisfied are the minimum of what is equitable and necessary to meet those just claims of the Services.

Now I want to answer the question which the noble Viscount, Lord Lee, and the noble Viscount, Lord Peel, put to me as to what is being done. I must go back to the undertakings that have been given in this matter. It was indicated in the summer of 1923 that—as indeed was reasonably to be expected—the Legislative Assembly would desire to discuss the Report, if possible, before final orders on it were passed. The Government of India on their side, equally reasonably, were anxious to meet that desire so far as possible. At the same time, they explained then, and again in March last, that, in the words of the Home Member, they—

“could not, either as an Assembly or as the Government of India, limit the constitutional and statutory powers of the Secretary of State in this respect; and if there should be matters pressed upon him by the Royal Commission which might require immediate orders, then it would be necessary to recognise his power to take a decision in advance of any decision by the Assembly.”

That is what Sir Malcolm Hailey stated.

The Report was published on May 27 last and the Assembly, which met on the same day, again pressed for an opportunity of discussion before official orders should be passed. Speaking in your Lordships' House on June 3, I said this to your Lordships—

“I hope very much that the Viceroy may find it possible to dispose of the discussion

of this Report in the Assembly which is now being held, and I have already pressed upon the Viceroy, as strongly as I could, my sense, and that of my Council, of the urgency of dealing with the matter as quickly as possible, in view of the considerations to which the Viceroy himself has called attention."

I showed my noble friend Lord Lee the telegrams which I had sent to the Viceroy to that effect—

"I have no doubt whatever that Lord Reading will do all he can to secure the earliest possible expression in a sufficient manner of the views of the Assembly. He knows the feeling of His Majesty's Government upon the subject, and he will, subject to the obstacles standing in his way, be disposed to press forward the matter as quickly as possible."

It was at that time hoped that an opportunity would be found to debate the Report in the special Session of the Assembly which was then proceeding. The time available, however, both for examination of the Report by members and for its discussion in the special Session, was found to be so limited that it became apparent that some further opportunity of discussion in the Assembly would be desired and that this desire could not reasonably be demurred to. The Viceroy expressed to me his opinion that the contemplated debate in the Assembly should not be brought on before the September Session.

A Resolution was moved in the Assembly on June 10 in the following terms:—

"(1) That it is impossible for this House during this Session to devote to the Lee Commission Report, which was published on the 27th May, the attention that it requires for a careful and thorough examination of its proposals in all their aspects and bearings, and that for this purpose it is absolutely necessary to afford further time to this House till the September Session.

(2) That the interval of three months asked for by the House for consideration of the many important issues involved will neither cause any hardship to the Services, which will obtain any financial relief that may be eventually decided upon with effect from the 1st April, nor affect public interests by impeding recruitment for the Services during this year, which may proceed on existing lines.

(3) That any attempt to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee without giving adequate time to this House and country to form an opinion upon proposals of a far-reaching character, with their inevitable repercussions on other Departments and Services, is bound to be resented as exhibiting a supreme disregard of Indian public opinion and to provoke feelings of widespread discontent."

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After discussion the debate on the Resolution was adjourned by general consent, including that of the Government of India, until September next.

It must be remembered that at the date when the reservations were made in the Assembly as to the Secretary of State's power to pass early orders on urgent recommendations, at that date the purport of the Report was not known either to the Secretary of State or to the Government of India; and it was a presumable contingency that the Report might contain recommendations on which it would be expedient to take action successively in some order of priority, as had in fact been done in the case of the Report of the Commission of the noble Lord, Lord Islington, on the Public Services in India. When, however, the noble Lord's Commission submitted its Report, it became apparent that this method of procedure would not be appropriate. Both I myself in Council and the Government of India adopted the view of the Commission, that its Report must be treated as a whole; and, therefore, even apart from any question of the claims or the position of the Assembly in the matter, the passing of urgent orders on any important recommendation, or group of recommendations, could not be decided on in advance of full consideration of the content and implications of the Commission's proposals as a balanced whole. The procedure proper to be adopted fell, therefore, into this form—that the Secretary of State in Council, the Government of India in conference with the Provincial Governments, and the members of the Assembly, should simultaneously examine the Report as a whole of interdependent parts, and that when the Secretary of State in Council and the Government of India should have framed their provisional conclusions on the Report, the opinions of the representatives in the Assembly should also be ventilated before those conclusions should be crystallised into orders.

The Secretary of State for India in Council, who is, as the noble Viscount has pointed out, the final arbiter responsible to Parliament in regard to practically the whole field covered by the Report, must necessarily subject the Report to a thorough examination on points both of principle and detail. The mere fact that

he, as stated, accepts the view that the Report must be treated as a whole cannot, of course, in any way absolve him from the duty of examining the Report in all its bearings, or commit him in advance to the acceptance of each and every recommendation just as it stands. He must also use the occasion to determine which of the recommendations, in their relation to the Report as a whole, will, from their nature, require priority of treatment when the time comes to implement his decisions.

Secondly, this task cannot be carried through without close consultation with the Government of India and, through the latter, with the Provincial Governments, who will be very directly concerned with the major recommendations of the Report. The investigation has been and is being pushed ahead with all possible expedition; but although the speed will, it is hoped, be found to compare very favourably with the rate of progress achieved on similar occasions in the past, no one who knows the magnitude of the issues involved would expect that a Secretary of State, who takes the Report at all seriously, could possibly be in a position to pass final orders upon it as a whole within a space of two or three months. It may, therefore, confidently be said that no avoidable delay will have occurred if orders are passed within six months of the appearance of the Report; and that the promise of a discussion in the Assembly, quite apart from its great importance from the constitutional point of view, will not in fact be found to have affected the date by which the final decisions are taken. That promise was certainly never intended, nor does it appear to be in the least likely, to create any delay which might in its absence have been avoided.

Thirdly, no one can ignore the great stress laid by the Commission on their recommendation that their financial proposals should take effect as from the commencement of the financial year 1924-25. Prominence was given to this recommendation in the terms of the Resolution discussed in the Assembly on June 10.

The Report came under examination at the India Office on the day of its appearance, and no time was lost in entering into active consultation with the Government of India. Among the special points upon

which attention has been concentrated may be mentioned the following: Urgent questions immediately arose as to continuing or suspending in the current year recruitment for various branches of the Services whose future would be directly affected by the recommendations in the Report. In three instances, the Educational, Agricultural and Veterinary Services, the transfer of which to Provincial Governments has been recommended in the Report, it has been decided to suspend recruitment in this country for the present—without prejudice, of course, to resuming it if that should be decided upon. Recruitment for these Services does not take place at a fixed time, but as occasion demands, when vacancies or other reasons for recruitment occur. The case of the other Services had to be examined from a similar standpoint. As regards the Indian Service of Engineers, the Forest Service and the Geological Survey, the Government of India have stated their requirements, and selection committees either have met or will be meeting shortly to interview candidates. No difficulty is anticipated in obtaining them.

As regards the two pivotal Services, the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police, there is to be no suspension of the Indian Civil Service open competition in London which will be held in August as usual. The examination for the Police Service has already been held, and there is no reason to suppose that there will be any greater difficulty this year than last in securing the full number of recruits needed to meet the requirements of the Governments in India.

Secondly, it has also been necessary to explore thoroughly the legal aspects of the Commission's Report. The Commissioners themselves stated the belief that their recommendations could be carried into effect without any amendment of the Government of India Act, but the Secretary of State is, of course, obliged to satisfy himself that this holds true not only of the recommendations in themselves, but of any corollary proposals to which they may lead. Thirdly, the Report contains a number of recommendations of varying importance upon which provisional conclusions can be formed without the probability of their being affected by the ultimate decisions on the main lines of the Report. A process

of selecting and docketing the separate recommendations is therefore being carried on in order to clear the ground when the time comes to take the final decisions on the Report as a whole. That is the best reply I can give to the inquiry of the noble Viscount as to whether we are taking every possible step to clear the ground. I can assure him we are taking all the steps that we find it possible to take.

The second topic upon which the noble Viscount enquired was as to the situation which has arisen in certain Provincial Councils. First of all, with regard to the Central Provinces, I will briefly recapitulate the position which has arisen. In the Central Provinces the Legislative Council refused in March last to consider any of the legislative measures laid before it, and rejected the whole of the local Government's demands for grants for the financial year 1924-25. Stated briefly, the position is that the Ministry have resigned since the Council has refused to vote them salaries, and the Governor himself assumed the duty of administering the Transferred Departments under the provisions of the Transferred Subjects (Temporary Administration) Rules. He has declared that a state of emergency exists. The local Government, acting under the powers conferred by proviso (a) to Section 72D (2) of the Government of India Acts, has restored the whole of the appropriations originally proposed to the Legislative Council in respect of Reserved Departments — approximately 297 lakhs—with the exception of sums amounting to Rs.1,21,277, representing new expenditure for development chiefly in the Forest Department; and the Governor acting under proviso (b) to the same subsection has authorised expenditure for the financial year in respect of Transferred Departments amounting to Rs.153,20,044—a sum less by Rs.12,29,956 than that originally budgeted for, the curtailment being spread over the Departments.

The Governor does not intend to dissolve his Legislative Council, nor to summon it to meet in the immediate future, being of opinion that Dissolution would not result in the election of a Council with a different policy or outlook, and that it is useless to invite further action from a body which has shown itself determined not to legislate. The Governor considers, moreover, that the administration can be

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continued without immediate damage in the absence of the legislative measures which have been rejected by the Council, or of further legislative projects.

A further question arises which the noble Viscount has asked me in regard to what action we contemplate taking to relieve that transitional and temporary situation. Perhaps I had better deal with that and the question of the Bengal Legislature as well. I will give the answer to both together. With regard to the Bengal Legislature matters have been a little more interesting. The total strength of the Bengal Legislative Council is 140, of whom 114 are elected members. Of the twenty-six nominated and ex-officio members, seventeen are officials. Of the 114 elected seats the Swarajist Party secured some thirty-seven, and at an early date some thirteen members, who described themselves as Independents, declared their intention of supporting the Swarajists, who thus secured a minimum of about 50 votes. During the course of the Session they obtained other adherents, but still not an absolute majority of the Council. It will be observed that the voting of the Budget commenced on March 19 and ended on April 1 with the following results. Supply was refused altogether for all Reserved Subjects, except Police and European Education, and the demands under these two heads were reduced.

The Governor has restored the allotment budgeted for in the case of all the demands which were rejected *in toto*, minus, however, the sum of 5 lakhs, proposed as a contribution to the Calcutta Corporation towards the cost of a water supply project. He has also restored 6½ lakhs of the 8 lakhs odd cut from the Police Budget, the sums not restored being 1 lakh on account of cots and mosquito nets for the police and Rs. 24,000 on account of the pay of deputy superintendents. The sum of Rs. 99,000, representing grants to European primary schools, will be paid out of other provision which was voted for this purpose, and, if necessary, a supplementary grant placed before the Council later in the year.

The majorities by which these rejections or reductions were made were as follows: In four cases, one vote; in one case, two votes; in two cases, four votes; in two cases, five votes; and in one case, ten votes. In one case the Council re-

jected by four votes a Motion for total rejection, and immediately afterwards rejected by one vote the original Motion that the demand be granted. The Votes for Supply for Transferred Subjects were carried without reduction by majorities varying from one vote to eight votes, except in the following cases: (1), Ministers' Salaries, rejected *in toto* by 63 votes to 62; (2), Education, provision for inspecting officers' salaries, reduced from Rs. 7,46,900 to Rs. 1,11,500 by six votes; (3), Medical, provision of Rs. 588,000 for 161 civil surgeons, assistant surgeons and sub-assistant surgeons, and for 135 clerical officers, was rejected by one vote. As regards the third of these cases, as the services of the medical officers concerned are utilised also in the Gaols' Department (a Reserved Department) and as their retention is essential for that purpose, provision for their salaries has been transferred to the Gaols' Budget, and a demand to secure provision for them in that capacity will be placed before the Council at its next Session. Should that be rejected the Governor will presumably restore the amount.

It had been the intention of the Bengal Government to re-submit the other two Votes (Ministers' Salaries and Education Inspection Staff), in accordance with a request expressed from certain quarters within and without the Council itself, for reconsideration at a Session which was to have been held on July 7. But this intention has been temporarily frustrated by the action of the High Court at Calcutta which, on the motion of two members of the Council, has issued an injunction restraining the President from putting the Motion relating to Ministers' salaries. This is one of the disadvantages of having a statutory constitution as distinguished from a constitution of our own character. Meanwhile, the Ministers have not resigned, and have up to date retained office without salary, and the Bengal Government have given notice of dismissal to the 357 educational officers for whose salary provision has been refused, which will not take effect until such time as the matter can be brought again before the Council.

I desire to say a few words with regard to the injunction granted in the High Court. In the first place the injunction was based on the fact that the Council's

rules of procedure provide only for (a) the initial voting of the Budget demands, and (b) for the voting of excess, or additional, or supplementary demands for the purpose of covering expenditure actually incurred in excess of a Budget Vote, or for obtaining funds for which the original Vote is found to be insufficient, or which are required for purposes not anticipated when the Budget was framed. Secondly, the injunction was granted on the assumption that these rules of procedure exhaust the Council's powers, and consequently debar the reconsideration of a Vote once definitely rejected or reduced. This assumption does not tally with the intentions of the Joint Select Committee of Parliament as expressed in their Report on the Government of India Bill. They considered that the Governor, if so advised by his Ministers, should be at liberty to re-submit a Budget Vote on a Transferred Subject, which the Council had cut down or rejected, for consideration by the Council, and thought that no specific provision was necessary for this purpose.

The Government of India and the Secretary of State agree in thinking that the Rules referred to do not, in fact, preclude such a Motion, but in order to remove doubts on the subject, and incidentally to remove the grounds for the High Court's injunction, they have now amended the Rules. Meanwhile, the Bengal Government have appealed against the High Court's order, and I am considering the situation created by the intervention of the High Court in matters proceeding before the Legislative Council in India. I cannot speak definitely as to what action the Governor of Bengal will take because he is still in correspondence and consultation with the Viceroy upon the subject, and the Viceroy reports to me as to what is being done. But I understand the Governor proposes, as soon as he can, to reintroduce the Vote for the Ministers' salaries and also the Vote for the inspectorate, subject to any curtailment he might make on the ground of a pledge given in the Council that certain recommendations as to the transfer of part of the inspectorate to local bodies should be carried out. The Government thinks it reasonable that the recommendation for retrenchment of the staff and transferring it to local bodies should be had regard to before the amount of the Vote to be resubmitted is determined.

The question arises as to what procedure the Government should take to bring to an end this position in the Central Provinces and Bengal, which is only legal under the theory that it is a position of emergency; and the question also arises whether the Governor should exercise his power to suspend the transfer or revoke the transfer. That is now under the consideration of the Viceroy with the Governor of Bengal.

VISCOUNT PEEL: And the Central Provinces?

LORD OLIVIER: Yes. The question as to what further course of action may be taken is now under consideration. With regard to the propriety of it I think it is established that the Governor may reasonably act in such a manner. It must be assumed that the intention of the Government of India Act is that Transferred Departments are transferred for the purpose of being responsibly administered by a Council that would deal with the merits of the particular Votes on the grounds of the public interest only, and not upon the grounds of some constitutional purpose which they had in mind in order to put pressure on the Government of India. I do not know how far that agrees with the constitutional theory in this country that grievances must be redressed before Supply is granted, which may be the view of Indian politicians. But having regard to the fact that we have a statutory Constitution established for certain definite objects it does, I think, speaking as a layman, appear to be a perfectly reasonable construction of the Government of India Act.

The noble Viscount has made an inquiry in regard to the situation in the Punjab. The situation in the Punjab continues to be disquieted by the turbulent proceedings of the Akali Sikhs. There is little new to be said. I have referred to the statement I made on this subject in your Lordships' House on February 26, and I consider it gives what is still a correct and sufficient account of the origin and significance of these troubles. I will not take up your Lordships' time by repeating that statement. It is necessary to realise that there has been, and can be, no question of the Government intervening on any issue which can honestly be described as purely religious. Government intervention has been confined to

the upholding of the civil law, to the restoration and maintenance of the public peace, and to endeavours to promote a settlement of differences which threaten the peace.

In so far as their intervention has brought them into conflict with the present leaders of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandhak Committee, whom I will hereafter call the Shrines Committee, the conflict is not of the Government's seeking and cannot be said to relate to any purely religious issue. It would hardly be true to say that even when that conflict first began the motives of its promoters were exclusively religious, and there has unquestionably been throughout, even on the part of the most moderate of the Akali leaders, a desire to consolidate and advance the political power of the Sikhs in the Punjab. The interest fomented in regard to the question of the resignation of the Maharaja of Nabha, and the willingness of the Shrines Committee to accept assistance from the Indian National Congress, make it impossible to pretend that the issue is entirely religious and non-political. But the religious and political factors have now, in fact, become completely entangled with one another, and this fact constitutes the real difficulty before the Government. The Shrines Committee is in control of the Akal Takht and any order proceeding from that centre will carry the authority of a religious duty with the majority of the Sikh population, whatever its real basis or implication.

In the various issues that have arisen from time to time between the Punjab Government and the Sikhs, the Government have honestly endeavoured to separate religious from other issues, and it will be obviously the duty of that Government to continue the same endeavour in the future. For the moment, it is sufficient to observe that the great bulk of the rural Sikhs do actually seem to have been persuaded that Government is hostile to their religious interests. On the other hand, there are some indications that the situation is in course of improvement. It is evident that there has been considerable difficulty in finding recruits for the Jathas, averaging about 1,000 strong, which it has been the programme of the committee to send periodically to claim entrance to the Shrine at Jaito. The Government's primary objective has been, and is, to

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encourage, with the motive I have stated, a settlement of the religious question, and to promote an agreement among the Sikhs as to the control and use of the shrines, in dealing with the legal titles to which the first troubles arose.

General Birdwood, whose understanding and sympathy in regard to Sikh sensibilities must stand beyond question, was recently occupied on behalf of the Government of India in making a special effort to endeavour to arrange with the representatives of the Sikhs for the establishment of an authoritative committee with legal powers to regulate all such questions, but unfortunately these negotiations have failed, as did the similar previous attempt of the Government. The noble Viscount inquired what were the reasons for their failure, and he suggested that they were two, one being the uncompromising demand on the part of the Sikhs that all prisoners who were in custody on charges arising out of the previous quarrel should be released, and the other the demand that the Maharajah of Nabha should be restored to his Principality. I have not the actual text before me, but I think it is quite safe to say that both of those claims were made by the Akalis, and it is obvious that, in the form in which they were made, they were claims that could not be granted. How far they were whittled down I cannot say at the moment, but difficulties of that character were apparently the only difficulties that stood in the way of an agreement—difficulties, that is to say, not arising out of the difficulty of making arrangements to deal with the religious interests of the Sikhs, but out of past political matters in which the Government had come into opposition with the Sikhs.

In present circumstances no new course of action and no resort to extraordinary powers is contemplated. The Punjab Government, with the approval of the Government of India, intend to maintain order and peaceful security by consistent application of the law against all offenders, while neglecting no means of arriving at a speedy and equitable solution with regard to the matters in controversy.

Now I come to that which is perhaps the largest and most important question upon which the noble Viscount desired information.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I do not know whether the noble Lord intends to make any observation about Mr. C. R. Das, but I should be very glad to hear what he has to say on that point.

LORD OLIVIER: I had thought that the subject of Mr. C. R. Das, to which the noble Viscount referred, came later in his speech, but I will deal with it immediately. The noble Viscount has called attention to the imputations laid against Mr. C. R. Das of being associated with a revolutionary organisation believed to exist in Bengal for the promotion of outrage and murder, or at least of conniving at its proceedings, or of approval of the motives of Gopi Nath Saha, who assassinated Mr. Day, a police officer, by mistake for Mr. Tegart, another police officer.

VISCOUNT PEEL: Mr. Day was not a police officer. I think he was a merchant.

LORD OLIVIER: I am obliged to the noble Viscount. Mr. C. R. Das is the leader of the Swaraj political Party in the Bengal Legislature, and in the Indian National Congress. I am informed by a high authority in Indian politics that he has the reputation of being a particularly upright and scrupulous politician, second only to Gandhi himself in saintliness of character. He is unquestionably a man of high and admirable ideals on behalf of his country which he has finely and uncompromisingly expressed. For a sympathetic appreciation of his spirit and his aims, I beg leave to refer to the very interesting and informing article contributed by the noble Earl, Lord Ronaldshay, to the July number of the *Nineteenth Century* review. The political attitude and proceedings of Mr. Das, in the light of all the study that I have been able to make of them, appear to me to present a typical illustration of methods and reactions quite familiar in the development of a struggle for political evolution in the direction of self-governing national institutions.

Mr. Das appears to be one of those Indian publicists—and he is only one among many—who are convinced, or who are very near to being convinced, that no advance can be made in the attainment of self-government or political liberty by any nation or community that is under the rule of Great Britain except

through appeal to organised force or, failing this, to secret methods aiming at outrage. Politicians of this school constantly point to the history of the dealings of this country with the Home Rule movement in Ireland as furnishing the most familiar and crucial illustrations of their theories. Further, they argue that a sufficient threat of force, even without its exercise, will always intimidate British Governments. In this connection they invariably begin by referring to the evidence of a similar persuasion on the part of politicians of the highest predisposition to legality who, in anticipation of possible action distasteful to them in regard to the Government of Ulster, thought it expedient and perfectly proper to organise armed force—

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I hesitate to interrupt the Secretary of State, but will he inform me whether he is giving us his own opinions, or reading the opinions of somebody else? The point is very material.

LORD OLIVIER: I am stating what is the invariable argument used by Indian politicians in defence of their theory that Great Britain will never do anything unless there is a threat of armed force, and will always do something if there is a threat of armed force.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: That means that the noble Lord, as Secretary of State, is giving his own version of the motives which he believes to actuate a particular section of the Indian community in this matter, with a view, as I understand, to condoning the action which Mr. Das has taken. Am I justified in that interpretation?

LORD OLIVIER: The noble Marquess is not justified in saying that I make the suggestion in order to condone it. I am giving the noble Marquess what is, in fact, continually being put up to me by Indians as an explanation of what they believe. I am not condoning it.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: What we want is your own opinion. We do not want your version of the motives by which they are actuated. We want the opinion of the Secretary of State.

LORD OLIVIER: I think it is pertinent to the matter that I should describe the

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mentality which I have met with in this connection. I have seen it suggested in the Press, but I do not on that evidence think it necessary to accept any such assertion without full proof, that Mr. C. R. Das is actually so far associated with members of the revolutionary organisation in Bengal that an understanding has been arrived at, not only that he should not denounce their proceedings, but that he should give them countenance and assistance. In the episode to which the noble Viscount, Lord Peel, has referred, Mr. Das appears unquestionably to have associated himself with the support of a resolution, which, although it did not expressly go so far as to approve the assassination of Mr. Day, expressed an admiration for the character and motives of the assassin which has been, and not unnaturally, generally interpreted as implying a commendation of his deed. After the resolution referred to had appeared in the Press in its actual original form, an amended and altered version of it was published, touched up by inserting a phrase intended to dissociate the eulogy from the character of the action itself, and to confine it to the motives and mentality of the assassin, who, it may be observed, had pleaded that he was not of sound mind when he committed the murder.

It seems to me hardly unfair to suspect of Mr. Das that he has at any rate believed it expedient that the British public should be a little frightened as to what may be likely to happen in India if the policy of his Party is not given way to. Mr. Gandhi and many of Mr. Das' own political Party have taken a far more serious view of his position than that, and have shown a very lively spirit of indignation and protest. It is not necessary for the British Government to assume in this connection an attitude of high moral condemnation of Mr. Das as a politician on this account. The operations of secret murder societies are detestable, and occasionally, in their effects, atrocious. They impose a constant strain on the vigilance of the police. But they are not in themselves a political force, nor do they ultimately strengthen any political Party that dallies with them. It has been the continual policy of the Party to which I belong to repudiate and condemn all such forcible methods, quite independently of their

moral turpitude, on the ground of their foolishness and their futility.

My right hon. friend the Prime Minister, before he was called upon to take office, issued a most friendly, sincere and sympathetically wise warning to Indian politicians to stand aloof from all such insane methods. In so far as Mr. Das has allowed his name and influence to be associated with them—and it is clear that the event to which the noble Viscount has referred has caused a considerable disturbance of feeling amongst Indian reformers—I imagine that Mr. Das and his associates, in their delusion that Indian revolutionaries can frighten the British Government out of its senses by bombing policemen, having failed to do so by attempting to bomb a Viceroy, must be already beginning to recognise the political wisdom of Mr. MacDonald's advice. The incident is only another example of the political simplicity which has been shown in Mr. Das' leadership in the Bengal Assembly. In that Assembly the Swaraj Party, not being able actually to lead or to procure a majority of votes for the purpose of embarrassing the Government, organised the purchase for cash of the requisite balances either of votes or abstentions, to enable them to win the narrow divisions which they did. This fact is notorious.

VISCOUNT PEEL: May I ask the noble Lord this specific question, which I think I did ask in my speech. Quite apart from any moral condemnation of the action of Mr. C. R. Das, is the noble Lord prepared, in view of his admission and the obvious fact that these statements were a definite incitement to murder, to take any action or not?

LORD OLIVIER: I do not quite understand the noble Viscount's Question.

VISCOUNT PEEL: It is whether, in view of the admission that this statement definitely amounted to an incitement to murder, His Majesty's Government propose to take any action or not.

LORD OLIVIER: Whose admission that the statement is an incitement to murder?

VISCOUNT PEEL: I am speaking of the noble Lord's moral condemnation of these statements, and the obvious fact that they are an incitement to murder, and I ask

whether he contemplates taking any action.

LORD OLIVIER: I have not said they were incitements to murder.

VISCOUNT PEEL: I do not say that the noble Lord said so, but I referred to his moral condemnation of these acts, and also to the obvious fact that they were an incitement to murder, and I ask whether, whatever may be his own personal view—and I want a definite answer to my question—he does or does not intend to take any action.

LORD OLIVIER: I am not intending to take any action whatever. A certain resolution applauding the character of a young man who had committed a murder was passed at a public meeting by the vote of the Party of which Mr. Das is leader. Mr. Das did not pass the resolution, which was simply recorded as passed by the Party. How far that may justify the Government of India in taking action under the criminal law is a question for the Government of India to decide. I cannot presume to say that I am going to give instructions in the matter.

VISCOUNT PEEL: Is the noble Lord aware that Mr. Das, in his newspaper *Forward*, printed a statement very similar to the resolution?

LORD OLIVIER: Mr. Das, I believe said he would maintain his opinion of the intrepid or noble character of the young man who did the murder. Whether that is an incitement to murder or not, is not for me to pronounce, but it is a question for the criminal law, and it is for the Government of India to take such action as it may be advised. There is no obligation upon me to move in the matter.

VISCOUNT PEEL: Are we to understand that they do not intend to take action?

LORD OLIVIER: They have not reported to me any intention of taking any action. I cannot say that they do not intend to take action, but they have not reported their intention to me. To continue my statement, certain operations of what I suppose may be called the political Whip have been deposed to before a magistrate, and when I have spoken on this subject to a well-informed Indian politician he

has laughingly acknowledged that the facts might be as reputed, but justified the proceedings as being a fair response to what were considered to be the underhand and unfair proceedings of the bureaucracy, the Government of India and the British Government, in opposition to the reformers. Now, it would be absurd on our part, remembering our Parliamentary past, to say that the Swarajist Party in the Bengal Assembly are sinners above all politicians. But what I wish again to emphasise is the political futility of the methods of the Swarajist Party in the Bengal Legislature, and possibly elsewhere, as a means of attaining their immediate ostensible objects.

Their programme is to prove the Montagu-Chelmsford reform scheme a failure, and to bring the British Government to its knees by making the carrying on of government constitutionally impossible. They appeal, at some thousands of miles distance, to democratic politicians to denounce the overruling of the popular will by the autocratic action of the Government. Such demonstrations as have been made in the Bengal Legislature, in so far as they are procured by methods of corruption or intimidation, not only are not demonstrations of the popular will, but are demonstrations of the fact that the legislators who are so influenced have no will at all of their own, except a will to profit, and that any number of such politicians may be disregarded with complete equanimity as representing no kind of power. The significance and importance of a vote in a Parliamentary Election, or in a Parliament rest only upon the will or spirit in which it is given. If it is given on account of bribery or on account of fear, those who are responsible for, and who are entrusted with the power to carry on, the King's Government, know very well that they have no real force whatever to contend with, but only something which can be bought or frightened.

On this account, even if the machinery of government had been brought to a deadlock, it could not have been said that this had been done by the popular will; but as a matter of fact, the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution is not proved a failure by such proceedings, nor has government been brought to a deadlock. The Reform Constitution was designed to enable public questions to be dealt with

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by elected bodies on considerations of public interest germane to the particular subject at issue; that is to say, the policy of any particular vote. When a vote is given not on the merits of the particular service at issue, but for political sabotage, the Government is not only morally justified in entirely disregarding it as being mere irrelevance, but is constitutionally justified by the intention and legal form of the Indian Constitution, which was so framed as to protect the proper responsible Government of the country from being hampered by merely wrecking tactics, designed to intimidate.

I now come to the question with regard to the intentions of the Government as to any action arising out of the Inquiry into the Reforms. Your Lordships will remember that on February 18 a Resolution was carried in the Assembly recommending the revision of the Government of India Act, with a view to establishing full responsible Government, and, for the purpose, the summoning of a round-table Conference to frame a new Constitution, with a view to its ultimate enactment by Parliament. The Government of India could not accept that Resolution. In speaking in the debate on this Resolution Sir Malcolm Hailey, on behalf of the Government of India, made two pronouncements, of which the following are the most important passages. On February 8 he said:

"We do not limit ourselves to demanding that the system should be further tested. We propose to make a serious attempt to investigate justifiable complaints against the working of the scheme in practice, to assess the causes and to examine the remedies necessary. We claim that this must precede any general inquiry into the policy and scheme of the Act itself, or general advance within the Act itself."

The noble Viscount intimated a desire to be informed why that action was taken at all.

I tried to explain on February 26 that the Government of India was confronted by representations by the prominent political Party in India that the Government of India Act was entirely unworkable and unacceptable. The Government at home also were met by representations that there were difficulties in the working of the Act which it was well to look into. Being faced, on behalf of the Swarajist Party in India, with a demand for a revision of the Constitution, the Government of India took the position of saying: "It

is ridiculous that you, who have not co-operated in the first years of the Assembly, who have come into the second Assembly in order to obstruct, should present a pistol at our heads and ask us immediately to allow you to formulate a new Constitution. Before we are willing to consider whether there is anything presumable against the new Constitution, indeed, before any kind of consideration can be given to the criticisms of the Swaraj Party, surely there must be some case made out that the Constitution has in any respect worked inconveniently, or that it has worked inconveniently in respects in which it cannot be amended."

The view of His Majesty's Government and of the Government of India was that adequate satisfaction would be given to the demands of any reasonable critics if, in view of the very general allegation—not confined to the Swaraj Party, but shared in by the Independents and Moderates, and also shared in by a good many persons of the European community, some officials and some non-officials—that the scheme of diarchy was not working satisfactorily, a judicial Inquiry was set up, at which it could be seen whether any evidence could be given against the working of the Act. A Committee was set up, and in the first instance it was a Committee consisting of officials, to lay down what were the modes in which, having regard to the drafting of the Act, any modifications of established provisions could be made, either by Rule or otherwise. That was a purely formal operation. The second Committee set up was an enlarged Committee, including a certain number of non-officials—more non-officials, in fact, than officials.

However, I think I had better come back to the second statement made by Sir Malcolm Hailey, on February 18. He said:—

"Before His Majesty's Government are able to consider the question of amending the Constitution, as distinct from such amendments of the Act as are necessary to rectify any administrative imperfections, there must be a full investigation of any defects or difficulties which may have arisen in the transitional Constitution. If our Inquiry into the defects of the working of the Act shows the feasibility and the possibility of any advance within the Act—that is to say, by the use of the rule-making power provided by Parliament under the Statute—we are willing to make recommendations to this effect. But, if our Inquiry shows that no advance is possible without amending the

Constitution, then the question of advance must be left as an entirely open and separate issue on which Government is in no way committed. To that extent the scope of our Inquiry goes somewhat beyond that originally assigned to it; but I must again emphasise the fact that it does not extend beyond that scope to the amendment of the Constitution itself."

Those announcements were referred to by me in my speech in this House on February 26.

The action taken by the Government of India in order to implement the undertaking given by Sir Malcolm Hailey was as follows:—They first of all appointed an official "Expert" Committee, and on receipt from that Committee of their preliminary Report, the Government of India reconstituted the Committee by the addition of representative non-officials, and gave it the following terms of reference:

"(1) To inquire into the difficulties arising from, or defects inherent in, the working of the Government of India Act and the Rules thereunder, and

"(2) To investigate the feasibility and desirability of securing remedies for such difficulties or defects, consistent with the structure, policy, and purpose of the Act—

(a) by action taken under the Act and Rules, or

(b) by such amendments of the Act as appear necessary to rectify any administrative imperfection."

We are, then, putting the case of the plaintiffs against the Act to the test, and we are inquiring, as profoundly as possible, whether there is really anything to be said against the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution on the ground that it is unworkable, or that it works in a manner disadvantageous to the public interest. It is inquired: What will that lead you to? Sir Malcolm Hailey said: on the results of this Inquiry it must be left entirely an open question whether any further action must be taken. I do claim that the Government may have credit for endeavouring to maintain a judicial attitude upon this position.

As soon as we had set up this Inquiry in India the British Government and the Government of India were immediately attacked as having made no concession whatever to legitimate popular demands, but as having set up an official Committee to bind more closely upon India the chains of the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution. We were attacked, on the other side, by suspicious journalists and others in India on the ground that we

were opening the door to an immediate modification of the Constitution, and had practically given encouragement to the Swarajists to think that the Constitution would be modified. The position of the Government is entirely a judicial one. I have had innumerable representations—two or three hundred people have interviewed me on the subject of the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution—and I have had all manner of grades of assurances as to its workability and as to its unworkability. I do not propose to indicate in the slightest degree the effect of all these representations upon my mind.

As the noble Marquess urged that we should do, we have entrusted the next step in dealing with constitutional questions in India to the Viceroy and to his Council, and under his advice and in accordance with his recommendations we are proceeding. Whether there is, or is not, a case for establishing that the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms are really unworkable, as is claimed by almost every Progressive politician in India—not only the Swarajists—is a matter upon which His Majesty's Government are not in a position to form a judgment, and upon which a judgment can only be formed after the Viceroy has had all his Reports from his Provincial Governors and that Committee has gone thoroughly into the case and the evidence has been heard and considered.

The first purpose of that Committee, as the terms of its reference show, is to consider whether there are any defects in the working of the Act which can be remedied by Rules made under the Act, and the second is to consider whether there are any defects in the working of the Act, in its effect on the work of the Government, which can be remedied by alterations in the structure of the Act itself, without really altering the principle of the Constitution. I think that even the most rigidly minded of noble Lords opposite would say that it was a perfectly reasonable proceeding on the part of the Government and the Government of India to consider whether the Act itself could not be so utilised as to make its working more satisfactory. But, of course, I cannot deny that if the result of the Labours of that Committee should be to find that there are certain defects in the working of government under the provisions of that

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Act, which apparently cannot be remedied by any amendment of Rules, or by any amendments of the Act short of an alteration of the Constitution, then a question would arise as to whether any further steps should or ought to be taken for dealing with the question whether any further constitutional advance can be contemplated. Then, and then only, would there arise the question: In what way could such a question be dealt with?

The proposal of the Swaraj Party in the Assembly, as I have stated, was on the basis that they, the representatives of the Indian people, are entitled to draft and prescribe their own Constitution and to have a round-table conference for the purpose. A proposal that was mooted in the other House was that a Royal Commission should be sent out to investigate the constitutional situation. There may be other alternatives, but on none of those alternatives have His Majesty's Government come to any conclusion. They only recognise, and they cannot fail to recognise, that it is just possible that the result of this Inquiry may impose upon them the duty of coming to such a conclusion—that is to say, as to whether some steps should or should not be taken to re-examine the constitutional position. That will be the position if, and only if, it is proved to the satisfaction of the Government of India that there are certain defects, certain legitimate grounds for complaint in the operations of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, that cannot be redressed within the four corners of the Act without some revision of its provisions. That, I hope, is a satisfactory explanation of the position of His Majesty's Government. We are, at present conducting a judicial Inquiry in order that we may have evidence as to the operation of the Government of India Act. Until we have that evidence and the judgment of the Government of India upon it we can come to no decision ourselves as to whether the Government of India Act is operating well or not, and we cannot possibly come to any decision as to what further steps shall be taken as a result of that Inquiry.

LORD MESTON: My Lords, I beg to move that the debate be now adjourned.

Moved, That the debate be now adjourned.—(*Lord Meston.*)

LORD PARMOOR: Might I ask the noble Lord to what date he suggests the debate should be adjourned?

LORD MESTON: To Tuesday of next week.

LORD PARMOOR: I have no objection to that day.

On Question, Motion agreed to, and debate adjourned accordingly to Tuesday, July 29.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 25th July, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

Returned from the Commons, agreed to, with Amendments.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 28th July, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

Commons Amendments to be printed, and to be considered on Wednesday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 29th July, 1924.

INDIA.

Adjourned debate on the Motion of Viscount Peel that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to the situation in India (which stands appointed for this day), put off to Thursday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 30th July, 1924.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL. [H.L.]

Order of the Day read for the consideration of Commons Amendments.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD OLIVIER): My Lords, I beg to move that this House do take into consideration the Amendments of the House of Commons to this Bill. Those Amendments are two in number. The first is to Clause 1, page 2, line 18, after the word "vacant" to insert "in the case

of a person granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest as from the termination of that period and in any other case." The reason for this Amendment is very simple. The Bill as passed by this House provided that if any officer came on leave for any reason and did not return at the end of such leave his office should be vacant as from the date on which he came on leave of absence. That was not the intention of the clause, and there must have been some failure in drafting. Obviously, it would be unjust that when a public officer, say, a Viceroy or Commander-in-Chief, had come on leave of absence for public reasons at the request of the Government, the office should be deemed to be vacant, because it would stultify any act which he might have done in his official capacity if the office were deemed vacant during the whole of his leave of absence. The Commons Amendment rectifies that little clumsiness in drafting.

The second Amendment is on line 25, after "shall," to insert the words "unless the Secretary of State in Council otherwise directs." The clause in its original form prescribed that if an officer did not return after leave of absence he should be bound to repay any leave allowances which he had received during his leave, in such manner as the Secretary of State might direct. It was held by the House of Commons, and the Government agree, that that might in some cases work very unjustly: that is to say, assuming a man had come on leave of absence on the ground of his own ill-health, and that ill-health terminated fatally, it would be very unjust that the widow should be required in all cases to refund the leave allowances which he might have obtained. Consequently, the Amendment provides that the refund shall not be obligatory, but that the Secretary of State shall have a dispensing power, so that the refund shall be made unless he otherwise directs. I beg to move.

Moved, That the Commons Amendments be now considered.—(Lord Olivier.)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

COMMONS AMENDMENT.

[The references are to Bill No. 95.]

Clause 1, page 2, line 18, after ("vacant") insert ("in the case of a person granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest as from the termination of that period and in any other case").

Moved, That this House doth agree with the Commons in the said Amendment.—(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

COMMONS AMENDMENT.

Clause 1, page 2, line 25, after ("shall") insert ("unless the Secretary of State in Council otherwise directs").

Moved, That this House doth agree with the Commons in the said Amendment.—(*Lord Olivier.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 31st July, 1924.

INDIA.

Debate resumed (according to Order) on the Motion, made by Viscount Peel on Monday, July 21, That an Humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to the situation in India.

LORD MESTON: My Lords, in the speech with which the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India closed the first stage of this debate he said that he had not come to any conclusions as regards the workability of the Government of India Act, 1919. Indeed, if I did not mishear him, he went so far as to say that he had not formed any judgment at all as to whether it was necessary to come to any conclusions. All I desire to do to-day is to suggest to your Lordships that there are very strong reasons why a definite conclusion should very shortly be arrived at, and to put before you a few general considerations which I trust will be added to the materials which the Secretary of State will utilise when forming his judgment.

If there is one desire on the part of all who are interested in India, it is that we should approach the Indian problem without anything in the nature of Party bias. It is a huge Imperial responsibility and calls for a great united Imperial policy. If, therefore, in the suggestions which I put forward I seem to be approaching this matter from a slightly different point of view from that of the noble Viscount who introduced the debate and from the Secretary of State, it is a difference of angle only and not any difference of objective. Our objective, and the objective of every one interested in India, has always been the same. In the first place, it is to advance the happiness and promote the reasonable progress of the Indian people.

In the second place, it is to retain India within the British Empire. The latter consideration may seem to be so obvious that it hardly requires stating, but for reasons which I will refer to briefly in a moment, I think there is some advantage in laying particular emphasis on that aspect of the subject at the present juncture. Whatever may have been our mistakes and shortcomings we certainly have, at least within living memory, devoted ourselves exclusively and wholly to the achievement of these purposes.

Five years ago a very momentous and historic step was taken in pursuance of this object. That step had the approval of your Lordships. It had been investigated with the greatest fullness and care by a Committee which represented every shade of opinion in your Lordships' House, and in the other House. Its incidence and its implications had been thoroughly examined, and so far as political foresight could guarantee were provided for. The measure was nothing less than the introduction into India of democratic institutions, coupled with a system of training Indians to befit those who were the leaders of India for the task of governing India on democratic lines. Without cynicism it is safe to say that we have had very little experience of true democracy in this country or in any other Western country, and certainly it is a wholly exotic plant in India. At no time within ascertained history, and certainly on no recognisable scale, has India ever had practical experience of the working of democratic rule. In spite of that, and in all good faith, England gave the principle and promise of democracy, because she believed it was the greatest political gift in her power to bestow.

At the same time, so great was the novelty that certain obvious general safeguards were considered imperative, and were deliberately made part of the machinery of the new Constitution. They were safeguards designed in no way to retard the growth of the individual spirit, but to prevent that spirit being wrecked at the outset by inexperience, from being swallowed up and replaced by some subtle form of the old Oriental autocracy. Let me briefly enumerate the safeguards. The first was diarchy. Diarchy in essence was an attempt to preserve to Parliament the control over the essentials of administration, while it gave to the new Indian Ministry a field in which they could

exercise the practice of government and learn a sense of responsibility. The second safeguard was that curious arrangement by which the Central Executive is independent of its own Legislature. That, again, was obviously justifiable at the time, because it was intended to protect the great economic interests of India, internal and external, and provide for the defences of the country. The third safeguard was a group of provisions which certainly were unusual in such a Constitution. This group included such things as certain over-riding powers in the hands of the Governor, specific protection for public Services, and that most important provision, that there was to be no radical alteration in the Constitution for the first ten years—surely a reasonable enough precaution against impatient tinkering with one of the most daring political experiments in modern history.

Such were the conditions in which Parliament launched India on its course of political freedom. That was only five years ago; in fact, it is only three and a half years since the work was actually started; and yet to-day you have all over the length and breadth of India a vehement outcry against every one of these safeguards. "Diarchy," say our critics in India, "is dead. It has been an utter failure. The veto and the power of certification are an insult to our national spirit, and are intolerable as obstacles to the will of the people. The public Services have been bolstered up into a position in which they are able to thwart the policy of those whom they ought to serve. And finally, the ten years moratorium is a period far too long to wait for the next step forward, and in any case"—and this is always the clinching argument—"it is not for you Englishmen to sit in judgment upon us and to say when the next instalment of responsibility is due. Any such claim is an insult to our national spirit. It is for us to say whether or not, and when, we are fit for more responsibility."

I trust that I am not overstating the demands that are made by the more advanced section of Indian politicians. If anything, I think that I am understating them. I need only appeal to the fact that the leaders of that which we used to know as the Moderate Party are

here in England at the present moment pressing forward an entirely new form of Constitution by which, as I understand, the Central Government is to concern itself wholly and exclusively with the defence of the country and with its external relations, while all the other Imperial powers and the whole of the Provincial Governments are going to be handed over to popular control. This is, of course, to sweep away completely the whole idea of preparation and training in the new system. It plunges India at once into the whole of the complexities of Parliamentary government on the basis of an electorate which at the present time is wholly unfamiliar with such a system. A Parliamentary system is entirely unknown to the vast mass of the people in India, or to any but a very small fraction of the population. This scheme, if it is approved, will leave the Government of India with no duty whatever except that of preserving order in the country and protecting it from external aggression for whatever fee the Legislatures may choose to fix.

If the safeguards of 1919 are shown to have worked unfairly, or in a manner contrary to the spirit of the reforms, then by all means let us find a remedy. That is what I think and hope we must assume to be the scope, and the exclusive scope, of the work which is now being done by the Committee of Inquiry under Sir Alexander Muddiman. If recommendations of a more drastic and far-reaching nature are to be considered, surely it is not for that Committee to consider them. Any new Constitution, any radical alteration in the present Constitution, or any radical change in the policy of 1919, could not be entertained except after an inquiry which would be as authoritative, as detailed and as strongly endorsed by the needs of the time as that which preceded the passing of the Act of 1919.

What I would submit to His Majesty's Government is whether there is any case for a second inquiry of this type at the present moment. Is there any reason why that which was accepted five years ago by nearly all except the wildest extremists as generous and politic is now to be regarded as useless and fruitless? My own complaint of the Constitution is, not that it has been a failure or that it has fallen short of any reasonable expectation, but that it has never been worked

with any pretence of good will by the vast majority of those for whom it was designed, and by whose help it was intended to work. There have been quite a number of Indian gentlemen who, as Ministers or in other capacities—and all honour to them—have sat down loyally to work the new Constitution and to help their country through this difficult transition period, and they themselves, I am sure, would be the first to admit that they had only touched the fringe of the matter. But as for the great majority of the Indian leaders, what have they done except to use their influence, directly or indirectly, to prevent the new Constitution from working?

It may be quite natural to ask why it is that those who endorsed the new scheme five years ago should now turn so vitally against the working of the scheme after such a short period. Surely, it will be said, there must be something radically wrong, there must be some real grievance against which this is their only form of protest. The answer to this question is certainly not a pleasant one, either for India or for ourselves, but it is time that the answer should be given. It is no use our wrapping ourselves up in robes of optimism, or fencing with this question. The plain truth is that for several years, practically ever since the war, India has been going through a period of violent reaction—reaction against us and our work, with all its blessings and all its defects, and against our rule as a whole. This may be, and probably is, in considerable measure our own fault, but it is by no means wholly our fault. Historians of the future can allocate the blame, but it is surely for us to face the results.

The practical issue of this reaction has been a growing belief—and of that belief Mr. Gandhi and his lieutenants were only accidental exponents—that India no longer requires us, and that it can be made self-sufficient without us. I am far from saying that this is believed by every Indian gentleman who claims to be a leader of political opinion, and certainly it is not believed by the great majority of Mahomedan gentlemen in India, but I am absolutely convinced that the orthodox Hindu mind cherishes the idea of getting back to its own ancient civilisation and its own archaic ideals of life and society. It does not look for any progress along Western paths. It hopes that we

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shall soon go, with all our paraphernalia of culture, for it believes that then, and only then, will India find her own salvation.

It is this section of India opinion, not always visible, not always audible, but always present, that dominates, consciously or unconsciously, the great majority of Indian leaders to-day. It is perfectly sincere, perfectly logical, and at the same time, perfectly unbending. It makes an enormous appeal to the masses, and it can breed martyrs. But no terms that we can offer—and this is, I think, a point for us to consider very closely—no concessions that we can make, will ever satisfy it, except for a decent interval, after which the demands will be renewed and the outcry will begin again. It will sit down at round-table conferences with us, it will participate in Royal Commissions with us, but it will never be deflected from its ultimate aim. That is the dominant factor in the Indian political situation to-day, and it cannot be too clearly recognised.

Every observer who returns from India brings news of the growing mistrust that is felt in the Provinces regarding the Central Government. This unfortunate state of affairs, if it is due to any cause that I can suggest, seems due in large measure to the belief, whether unfounded or not, that Simla is at the present moment giving far too much time and importance to petty manoeuvres for position, small triumphs in debate, negotiations and cajolings, while it shuts its eyes to the great fundamental issues which lie before it. I apologise if I seem a little dogmatic on this point, but as one who has served India, and who loves India and the Indian people, I cannot help feeling anxious about the future, as many of our Lordships do. The danger centre is not in India, but is here. The danger lies in false analogies and loose sentiment. Do not let us for a moment forget that we are facing an implacable alternative—a definite hostility to our rule. No concessions, no release of a political prisoner here, or the curtailment of a period there, or any other makeshift of that sort, will meet the situation or do anything except stimulate fresh demands and new outcries.

Behind the screen of moderate men who present us with impossible alternatives to our policy of 1919 is that deep and

permanent irreconcilable element, which has always opposed all progress in India, from the days of Gautama Buddha down to the present day, and will always do so. Do not let us stultify ourselves by attempting to conciliate that. If we are to move forward on the lines of 1919, His Majesty's Government will best serve the interests of peace and of real progress in India if they make it abundantly clear that the policy then adopted by Parliament is to be pursued in all its essentials. Meanwhile, the first half of the ten years' period of trial has already lapsed. During the five short years that remain it is our clear duty to help the party of common sense in India by all means in our power, and it is their duty—and surely they can be induced to accept it—to set themselves to carry out the duties which are offered them, and to prove their fitness for still higher responsibilities.

VISCOUNT INCHCAPE: My Lords, I did not intend to intervene in the debate, but my noble friend Viscount Lee of Fareham, in his speech last week, put a question to me asking whether, as a purely business proposition, apart from any philanthropy, I had increased the emoluments of my various staffs in India beyond what they were before the war. My answer to that question is this: Young men going out to India to my business now go out with emoluments considerably higher than they were before the war. In my own case I went out as an assistant to my firm at the age of twenty-one, on an inclusive salary of 300 rupees per month. A young assistant going out now receives, with allowances, 500 rupees per month for the first year, 550 for the second year, and 600 for the third year. Men with special qualifications are more highly paid. At the end of three years the emoluments increase according to the ability displayed.

After five or six years' service in India our men get a free passage home, with eleven months' leave with half pay, and a free passage back to India if they return, as ninety-nine per cent. do. After a second spell of five years' service in India another eleven or twelve months' leave is given, with half pay, and thereafter similar leave every four years, with half pay and in all cases with free passages. The home leaves are in addition to yearly leaves of a month or so in India on full pay. Where men are

stationed not in Presidency towns they get six months' leave every three years on half pay, with passages both ways. I have looked into the salaries which my European staff receive after, say, nine, ten or twelve years' service, and find that they range from 1,125 rupees to 1,525 rupees per month. Beyond that they rise gradually to 3,000 rupees, according to merit, and those who have shown exceptional ability are admitted as partners, though, of course, this is not possible in every case, just as it is impossible for every midshipman to become an admiral.

The expenses of Europeans in India have greatly increased during the last ten or fifteen years, alike in the way of food, rent, servants' wages, clothing and railway fares, and I am free to admit—as the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, mentioned, with a glance at me—that the passage rates of the Peninsular and Oriental line are higher than they were before the war, owing to the great increase in the cost of running the ships. The conditions of life of my European employees in India, living as they do for the most part in Presidency towns, are far more agreeable than those of the bulk of the men in the various Civil Services. The latter are often banished for long periods to the jungle, where the amenities of life are to a great extent absent, with very little, sometimes no, European society, where there is no electric light, no electric fans, and a very limited area in the shape of decent roads, where supplies of good food are difficult to get, and where, when they are obtainable, their cost is far greater than in the trading centres.

Their wives bear the hardships of this banishment in a way that only British women do. They suffer in health, they lose their looks, they see their children pale and pining through the long spell of hot weather, and they have to endure separations, torn between their love for their husbands and their love for their children. Those of us who have spent twenty or twenty-five years in the Plains, with the thermometer standing at anything from 85 to 100 for eight months of the year, know what it is to go through the long Indian day. I can assure my noble friend Lord Lee that the benevolent sympathy to which he referred

on the part of commercial employers does exist. We are not tied by any hide-bound rules, as I admit a Government Department must necessarily be, and we do have, if I may venture to say so, a certain amount of the milk of human kindness towards those who grind out our corn.

The Committee over which I had the honour to preside last year was called upon to make proposals for the reduction of Expenditure in India, which we did. But we made no suggestion to reduce the emoluments of the Europeans in the various branches of the Government Service. The reductions which we did propose have, I believe, been carried out practically in their entirety, and the finances of the country are now on a sound basis. India, I am credibly informed, is able to balance her Budget and leave something to the good.

The Europeans in the service of the Government of India are a gallant band. There are no men, so far as my experience goes, who are more loyal or more devoted, more able or more hard working, or who have a higher sense of duty, than the Europeans in all branches of the service of the Government of India. They have accepted the so-called reforms in the very best spirit, and it will be a fatal blunder if we fail to treat them with consideration. If we do we shall not retain them, and we shall not get the best brains and the highest class of men to go out to India, not only to the Civil Service proper, but to all the other branches. I am in entire agreement with the noble Viscount, Lord Lee of Fareham, that the time has come to improve the emoluments of the European Government servants of all classes if we are, as is absolutely essential, to retain and attract the right type of men to enable us to carry on the great and unselfish work, with which we are entrusted, of governing, administering, and developing our Indian Dependency.

In my humble opinion it will be some time yet before India is able by itself to carry on the development of the country by means of roads, railways, canals, irrigation, afforestation, sanitation, water supply and the like, to which, so far, the country is entirely indebted to the British. It will be many a long day before India is able to govern itself to the advantage of the dumb millions and the hundred and one diversified races and

creeds of which the population of India is composed. If the authority of the Viceroy and the Civil Service should be undermined then woe betide the country! Murder, riot, and rapine will be rampant and, as even the late Lord Morley said some years ago, "Remove the supremacy of the British Raj from India, and the population will be at each other's throats."

LORD SYDENHAM: My Lords, a very common infirmity of old age prevented me from hearing the speech of the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, the other day, but I have read that speech most carefully, and I hope he will forgive me if I tell him quite plainly that I gather from it that he has not attained to any real, clear understanding of the grave realities of the situation in India at the present moment. I do not blame him for a moment, because I know well that it is almost impossible for any one who has not lived some years in India, and studied the country and the ways and thoughts of the people, to grasp the meaning and the implications of those very ominous facts which the noble Viscount gave to us the other day. But a Secretary of State can get good advice. He can get plenty of advice from all kinds of people, and it is his business to weigh that advice, and form his decisions accordingly.

I note from the speech that the noble Lord apparently relies upon an informant who, as he says, "laughingly" gave him his opinion. There is nothing whatever to cause amusement in the situation of India at the present moment. One of his advisers, whom he describes as "a high authority on Indian politics," told him that Mr. C. R. Das "has the reputation of being a particularly upright and scrupulous politician, second only to Gandhi himself in saintliness of character." Perhaps that is some other Mr. Das, because there are a good many of that name in Bengal, or it may be, to use a vulgar expression, that the noble Lord's informant was trying to "pull his leg." But I am quite certain that Mr. C. R. Das's followers would fail to recognise him in the description given by the noble Lord. Before making up his mind I hope, therefore, that the noble Lord will take some other opinion. If he knew India he would understand that saintliness is a

solid political and economic asset, and, if he would take the trouble to look up the antecedents of the Mahdi, who laid waste the Sudan, he would understand the essential truth of that proposition.

Two facts emerge, in my mind, from the speech of the noble Lord. First, it must now be understood throughout India that any one, in speech or in writing, is free to glorify the murderer of a helpless Englishman, who was not even a police official, as the noble Lord seemed to have been induced to believe. The noble Lord has not one word of condemnation for this glorification of an assassin, but I am glad to find that he did say that he did not condone this grave offence. He went on to add that:

"It is not necessary for the Government to assume in this connection an attitude of high moral condemnation of Mr. Das as a politician on this account."

I venture to think that that is not the moral standard which the British Government has hitherto upheld in India and elsewhere. In the second place he has made it clear that he has flung the Constitution of India into the melting pot before it has existed for five years.

The records of our debates in the past seven years abound in warnings of what would happen in India, and of what has now happened. On October 24, 1917, before the then Secretary of State started on his disastrous tour throughout India, the noble Marquess, Lord Lansdowne, and the noble Earl, Lord Middleton, both expressed their anxiety and pleaded for caution, and both pleaded in vain. In opening that debate on a Motion almost exactly similar to that of the noble Viscount, I used these words:

"If the masses in India ever come to believe that the Government can be coerced by the threats of a noisy minority, then India will be launched on the road to anarchy. The paramount authority which alone holds, and alone can hold, together the vast medley of races, languages, castes and creeds which constitute India, must be maintained. Peace and order are the greatest interests of the people of India."

What has happened since then? A little minority did either coerce or cajole the Government. The paramount authority has been shaken to its foundations, and we have put nothing in its place. Peace and order have been rudely and widely disturbed, and can now only be restored by freely using the military force, as we have lately seen. India is evidently on

the road to disorders similar to those which are occurring throughout China at the present time.

The Government of India Act, which affected the destiny of 320,000,000 human beings, was rushed through Parliament at headlong speed, and we are now beginning to realise the fatal fruits of a most rash piece of legislation. The noble Lord said that "every progressive politician in India claims that the Act is unworkable." I think that a great many people in this country are coming to that conclusion. I am glad to see that the noble Lord, Lord Meston, who was an expert adviser on this Constitution, though he does not quite arrive at that decision, evidently thinks that we have gone as far as we can do, and that it will be most dangerous for us to go any further. The Secretary of State told us, as an instance of the difficulty of working the Constitution, that in the Bengal Council votes were actually bought for cash, as is, of course, well known to many of us.

The fundamental defects in this Constitution were mainly three. I say nothing about diarchy, because that was always impracticable, and that, after all, was merely a detail. The first defect was that the Act ignored the vital interests of the vast mass of helpless people, for whose welfare we are, and must remain, solely responsible. In fact, it left a rural population of over 80 per cent. entirely at the mercy of the townspeople—lawyers, moneylenders, and so on. In the second place, it did not provide for the political protection of powerful minorities like the Mahomedans which have hitherto relied upon us to give them equal justice, and they found themselves politically swamped by the huge superiority of the Hindus in numbers. Thirdly, it dangerously weakened the paramount authority which had hitherto held India together, and which alone can hold India together until such time as the Indians can be guided in the direction of self-government.

As regards the feeling of the Moslems at this moment, may I quote a very important despatch from the experienced correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* which was sent from Simla only last Tuesday week? He said this—

"So disgusted are Moslems with what they regard as the weakness, if not the disloyalty, of the British, that it is possible that they will unite with Hindus in any action that tends to drive British authority

out of the country in the immediate future, but their intention will be merely to clear the ground for a contest for supremacy with their secular enemies. That they will be content to submit to the inequality of playing permanent second fiddle to the Hindus is ridiculous—and more ridiculous than ever at a moment when the success of Turkey has made every Moslem in the world hold his head an inch higher. Should matters ever come to an armed struggle between the two in India there can be only one end to it."

That agrees entirely with the information that I have received. What can the end be? The end would, of course, be the reassertion of Mahomedan rule throughout the greater part of India and it would be the rule of the sword.

What have been the outstanding results of this great democratic experiment in India—the experiment which the noble Lord, Lord Meston, described as "wholly exotic" and which Mr. Montagu once described as "very dangerous"? Everywhere confidence in the British Government has been shaken in the minds of senior British officials and in the minds of the humblest dwellers in the villages of India. That loss of confidence is wrecking the great Services on which India has depended in the past for order, for progress and for prosperity. My noble friend Lord Lee of Fareham, who has just been in India and has discharged with very marked ability a most difficult task, recognises this fully. He has told us that the patience and *morale* of the Services had almost reached breaking point, and he warned us that unless their position was restored it would be the first step on the road to losing India altogether. I cannot altogether agree with him on that point, because I do not think it was the first step. I think it is a necessary consequence of the policy which we adopted in regard to India and that this danger was pointed out at the time.

The Services are visibly crumbling away, and it may be impossible to restore them even if, as I hope, all the proposals of my noble friend are now carried into effect without delay. But the effect of this crumbling of the Services is a growing corruption on the one hand, and, on the other hand, violent disorders and the appearance in many places of just the same kind of banditry which marked the fall of the Mogul Empire. In one Province there have been some painful cases of corruption, but nothing could be done on account of the grave scandals that would

be involved in any investigation. But the result of our waning prestige has been seen in the terrible total loss of human lives running into thousands and unknown since the days of the great Mutiny.

Most of the great towns of India have now been the scenes of murderous riots. In Calcutta, the other day, mobs were murdering Sikhs; at a later date the same or other mobs were murdering Ghurkas. At Nagpur and at Delhi, the capital of India, the Hindus and the Moslems have been engaged in violent civil war, and British troops were required to save Delhi from probable destruction. The Akali movement among the Sikhs is also in a very serious position. I think it was badly handled at the beginning. But the main thing was that it was diligently exploited by the politicians of the Congress, not because they had the smallest sympathy with Sikh aspirations but because they saw a chance of injuring our position in India. The Akali movement has already cost a number of lives and the more ignorant rural Sikhs have been led to believe that the Government is hostile to their religion and also that we are about to withdraw from India. Never until the reforms were proclaimed has rioting been so widespread, so frequent, and so serious; never were the relations between the two great religious communities of India so strained as they are to-day, and never were the relations between cause and effect so transparently clear as they are in this case.

The Government of India Bill was hustled through Parliament, as I have stated, because, so we were told, it would bring peace and contentment to India. It has brought nothing except the sword. It alienated our best friends and supporters in India. It satisfied no one and it became the starting point of further political demands, as my noble friend Lord Meston has so clearly pointed out. Having handed over most of our authority to Councils which are seeking to paralyse their Governments at the present time, we are now pressed under threats, as the noble Lord has said, to hand over all the rest.

What is the noble Lord going to do? He said that he was considering how to enable the officials of Bengal to draw their salaries. I hope that, at least, he will arrive at a decision on that point

in as short a time as possible. He was very vague about the Central Provinces where, of course, the Act has ceased altogether to run. Now the question is this: Are we going to allow disorder to go on increasing and to be forced to shoot down misguided people, people whom we allow to be misguided and to be incited to acts of violence? The present situation has been well described as "the result of a long series of ineffectual compromises." That situation cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. It must soon become necessary for us to decide whether we intend to govern, or to leave India. But if we do not govern we shall certainly have to go, because somebody must govern those teeming millions of India and must give them the peace and order which, as I have said, is their first interest. Now that the great Services are suffering, as my noble friend so clearly stated, from creeping paralysis, it may be impossible in future to govern unless, by adopting all his most important proposals, we can bring back to them confidence and contentment. So long as we really governed India these disturbances to which I have referred were rare and comparatively mild. Most of them could be and were averted by stout-hearted British officials with the prestige and the power of a great Government at their backs. In great native States like Mysore and Hyderabad these things do not happen, because those States are governed. On the other hand, I saw yesterday that at Srinagar there had been riotous strikes, and I have no doubt whatever that they were fomented from outside of the State of Kashmir. In Iraq, as in India, we have set up democratic institutions which are wholly exotic. Those institutions depend entirely upon the British armed forces. If those forces were withdrawn either from Iraq or from India the Constitution would crumble to pieces in a week.

That is the amazing position in which we now find ourselves. Believe me, in the East the value of prestige is far above rubies; it is absolutely priceless. Our prestige in the East is distinctly falling away. The Soviet Government, with which His Majesty's Government has been painfully negotiating for many months, is now doing all it can to make our position in India, and in the Far East impossible. We

know what it accomplished in the Central Provinces, but we do not know what operations it is carrying out in other parts of India, and what part it is taking in the dangerous secret societies which exist in Bengal. It has had some success there already, and if it got the loan, which is the only thing that it came to this country to get, then it would be able to extend its operations, and would be still more dangerous to us than it now is.

The abandonment of the Singapore naval base will undoubtedly send the British barometer still lower down, because it must be understood as meaning that we no longer intend to defend our territories in the East. What the noble Marquess, Lord Curzon, once most happily called "the whispering galleries of the East" do not repeat the speeches of Ministers, and would not explain what the noble Viscount, the First Lord of the Admiralty, described the other day as the policy of "appeasement," but what they do repeat and re-echo is that British power and authority are gradually passing away. This is being said in the bazaars not only in India, but in Japan, China, Afghanistan, Persia and Iraq, and even in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. In the conditions which I have tried most briefly to describe, and which the noble Viscount who moved this Motion has strongly emphasised, I am convinced that real peril lies before us, not only in India, but elsewhere in the East, and it does seem to me that the speech of the noble Lord will add to the great anxiety which all feel who love India and her peoples, and who think first and last and always of their peace, progress and prosperity.

LORD HARRIS: My Lords, it is with a great deal of hesitation and timidity that I rise to speak at all upon this most important subject, and I do so only from a very deep affection for the masses of the Indian people. I have had some experience of India. I was there for some years as a little child dependent upon the kindly and affectionate offices of the natives of the country. I went there, as many of your Lordships have done, as a traveller to see and observe as much as I could. I went there a third time in a Government office, and spent some years there. Finally, I went as a visitor to an august ceremony. The result of my experience of India is that I am perfectly

satisfied that the voices that we hear coming from India are not the true voices of India. They are the voices of an uneducated, small minority; they are not the voices of the mass of the Indian people.

I might illustrate that with a story told me by Sir George Birdwood, whose acquaintance with India was immense. He had served during the Mutiny in the column operating in Central India under Sir Hugh Rowe, who was in charge of a medical party working on the flank of the column. As he went along an engagement was going on, and he came across a ploughman singing, as one often hears them doing at their ploughs. He said to him: "What is all this outcry about?" The ploughman replied, "I do not know; it is something to do with the sahibs." That ploughman was not troubling himself about politics; he had his own business to attend to. And so it is with the masses of the Indian people. I do not think they care very much who is at the top so long as they get their land at a fair assessment, and are left in peace to cultivate it. I do not think they are concerned very much whether it be Hindu or Mahomedan or Christian who is governing the country. They want to be left alone to carry on their business. It is a wrong idea to think that the Indians are intent upon having thrust upon them the political system of a foreign country which is the result of centuries of trial and struggle and experience.

I would venture to ask your Lordships to bear in mind this. Except for the reign of the Moguls, has India shown any capacity except under us for central control? What foreign Government that has been there and established central control has produced such advances and advantages as has the British? I do not care in what direction you look—whether it be in trade, means of communication, peace within its borders, protection from external attack—no Government has ever done so much as we have for India. By what is our system to be replaced if we hesitate in our task? The idea that the Hindu and Mahomedan populations are lamb is a complete delusion. You are faced by a difficulty the moment that a and that is the difficulty of officering the Central Indian Government is established, and that is the difficulty of officering the

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Departments right through the country down to the lowest official position. If there was an Indian Government do you think the Mahomedans would have half a chance? At this moment it is the fact that we have to protect the Mahomedan population. In order to give them an official position at all we have to reserve a proportion of the official appointments for the Mahomedans. They are not so clever a race as the Hindus.

Most of this agitation, as I expect the noble Lord knows, is being engineered by the Brahmin of the Deccan. The Mahomedans have no voice in it. They are being wagged from the Deccan by the Brahmin, who is the most astute politician in the whole world. That is what we are confronted with. If you ever carried out the idea of retiring from India in the belief that an Indian Government is possible, the country would be at once domineered by the Brahmin of the Deccan, and the Mahomedan would not have half a chance. That is the inevitable result. When have the Indians ever shown any capacity for real self-government? For centuries of their history what was there but strife and disturbance, and incapacity to rule themselves? That is the experience of centuries. We have introduced all these advantages and reforms, and is it conceivable that now, having brought them to this pitch of civilisation and comfort, we can hesitate? Is it possible that we can now retire from the task that we set ourselves, and which we have carried out, I venture to say, as honestly and as creditably as ever any nation carried out a great work in the history of the world? Can we contemplate for one moment retiring from that task?

In my humble opinion, what we have to do is to tell India very plainly that they are incapable of governing themselves; that they are incapable of protecting themselves from external violence or internal tumult. I am not going to have any sympathy for the merchants and other people who have invested their money in India, for foreigners who have invested their money there, although they are entitled to be considered. What I am thinking of is the mass of the Indian people who will be subjected to great discomforts, much brutality and much tumult, if we hesitate in our task. They are the only people of whom I am

thinking—the ignorant masses. And what we have to do is resolutely and courageously to tell the Indian people that they are incapable of self-government, incapable of self-protection either from the outside or inside.

I endorse very much of what was said by Lord Meston. We have introduced incautiously and too suddenly, in my opinion and in the opinion of other noble Lords with experience of India, a system of Parliamentary government to which the country is quite unsuited and of which it had had no experience previously. But we have done it, and we have to face the position. The only thing to do now is to carry on with that system resolutely and courageously on the basis that was laid down originally and without making any further concession. I had the advantage of listening to a speech delivered early this year to the Empire Parliamentary Association by a distinguished native Indian gentleman of the agricultural classes, a man with great official experience in Madras and, I believe, at Simla. It was an interesting speech. It was delivered in the purest English; one could understand every word he said, and one had every respect for it coming from a man of his experience, his caste, his birth and training. There was every reason to expect that it would display the capacity of India for self-government. I came away absolutely hopeless. If that is the attitude of mind of a man of his caste, his education and his training, if they believe that they are capable of self-government, as this gentleman indicated he believed they were, from the military point of view as well as the civil point of view, then I am justified in saying that the mental capacity of those men who are now supposed to be voicing the opinions of India is very small. Their arguments could be easily upset by a reference to previous history and existing facts.

Arriving at this hopeless state, so far as their mental and practical capacity for carrying out self-government is concerned, I can only fall back on the advice which Lord Meston gave in his speech—namely, that all we can do now is to carry out courageously the reforms we incautiously introduced. We cannot go back on them for at least ten years, possibly never, but at the same time we should let it be clearly understood throughout India that

we are doing so because they are in a state of tutelage, a state of infancy, so far as self-government is concerned, and that we should endanger the comfort and peace of many millions of people if we were afraid of the voices of the few who can make their voices heard. We must not be afraid of these voices, and we must have sympathy for the masses of India.

LORD AMPHILL: My Lords, I do not intend to deliver a set speech on this question and, indeed, I have not prepared any speech for this debate. Nevertheless, I venture to ask your Lordships' indulgence for a few moments. I am tempted to do so by the speeches to which we have listened from Lord Meston and Lord Harris. If those speeches had been made in 1919 Parliament would not have made, incautiously as Lord Harris says, so great an experiment as was made then. I am delighted to find myself more or less in agreement with Lord Meston. At the time when the Government of India Bill was being discussed in Parliament five years ago he and I were in disagreement almost bitter in its intensity. Now I find that there are a great many points, so far as his speech went, on which we are in entire agreement. And it is not I who have changed my opinion in any way. My noble friend seems to have removed or burst through some political crust that has overlaid the whole of the experience and wisdom he gained in his long years of brilliant Indian service and has come down to those convictions and impressions which must have absolutely saturated his mind during the whole time he was in India.

He has discovered now that this great gift of representative government is exotic to the people of India, he seems to recognise that the people of any country do not welcome gifts which are strange to them and which are, in fact, exotic. He recognises now what he refused to recognise five years ago—namely, that in order to work the diarchy system at all good will is required—and he is pained and surprised to find that good will does not exist on the part of those to whom this greatest and best gift, as he describes it, was handed. I agree with what was said by the noble Viscount, Lord Lee of Fareham, that we depend absolutely and entirely on the Public Services in India for that good will which alone can make the reformed system

workable and I thoroughly endorse everything that he and Viscount Peel said about the magnificent loyalty and good will with which the Public Service in India has endeavoured to do its best to make the scheme workable. Nothing throughout the generations of magnificent achievement of our fellow-countrymen in India becomes them better than the way in which they have tried to "play the game" in this respect.

There was, however, one observation of Lord Meston's which has tempted me to intrude for a few moments. It struck me as profoundly true, and if it had been known to Parliament five years ago it is impossible that so grave a mistake as was then made would have been made. I was unable to take down the exact words of the noble Lord but they were to this effect: that the orthodox Indian's mind looks to a return to its own religious and social institutions. That absolutely hits the nail on the head. Lord Meston calls it reaction. I do not think that is the right term. It is not so much a reaction as the climax of that great struggle which has been going on ceaselessly between Eastern and Western belief, thought and expression.

Although Hindu politicians glibly use our terms, such as self-determination, popular government, votes for the people, and so on, the last thing in the world they want is a form of government on Western lines. The only purpose for which they are seeking to obtain self-government is to reintroduce social and religious institutions as they existed generations ago before we came to India. When Mr. Gandhi talked of the British Government as "satanic" he was only using an expression which correctly expressed the mind of every orthodox Hindu, and the reason why during the past twenty years such slanderous and violent attacks have been made upon British officials, both civil and military, is not that it is thought that they have been unjust or unfair in any way, but that they are regarded as the ostensible guardians of a civilisation which is *anathema maranatha* to the followers of Shiva and Vishnu and their personified female energies.

Lord Meston said that no terms which we can offer will ever satisfy the Hindu politician. There, again, I agree with him absolutely, but if he and Lord Harris had said that five years ago they would

Lord Ampthill.

have been doing a better service to your Lordships' House and to Parliament generally than they did in blessing the reform scheme. What is the present state of affairs? In the first place, we see that in two Provinces the Nationalists have refused to allow the Councils to legislate at all. Secondly, we have seen in the Imperial Assembly repeated attempts to bring the machinery of administration absolutely to a standstill. In the third place, we witness, as the result of our well meant endeavours and our conciliatory offers, a sudden and bitter recrudescence of religious and racial antagonism, and we also see that thing which, above all others, we had hoped to avoid in offering them so-called democratic institutions—namely, the immediate denial of any share in administrative posts to minorities. That is the position, and it is a situation in which the European Services in India alone can furnish not only the knowledge, experience and firmness which are required to make the scheme of reform a success but also the good will and encouragement which is required by those who do not wish to put an end to British rule.

I cannot sit down without uttering one word of warning, which I have very much on my conscience. It seems to me, so far as I am able to appreciate the situation in India, that we are getting very near to a time when it will be necessary for us to intervene with military force. If that necessity does not arise on account of riotous disturbances in British India, it will very certainly arise on account of attempts to unsettle the States under native rulers. The Indian Princes will be obliged to suppress with armed force any attempt to upset their rule in their own States, and we are obliged by Treaty to support them against any attempt to overthrow the present system of governance.

My warning is this. Is it not better to anticipate that fatal and dreadful necessity of using armed force which, before long, will inevitably arise in India? Prevention is surely better than cure, and there is only one way in which this can be prevented and anticipated, and that is by making it clear that, so long as we remain in India, we intend to govern—that is to say, to support and uphold all those who are exercising the rightful authority of the British Govern-

ment. That can be done by a clear, explicit and unequivocal statement on the part of His Majesty's Government that they intend to adhere to the letter of the Act of 1919, both as regards the explanation which is contained in the Preamble and also as regards the very explicit conditions which are set forth in Section 41—namely, that there will be no further advance in so-called democratic government until this trial of ten years is over, and until the people of India have shown that they wish to co-operate with real honesty and good will to make the scheme a success.

LORD PENTLAND: My Lords, I regret extremely that, owing to my own mistake, I missed the advantage of hearing the observations of my noble friend Lord Meston and my noble friend Lord Sydenham on this very important subject, and consequently it is with some hesitation and diffidence, though I have heard the whole of the rest of the debate, that I offer a very few observations to your Lordships on this subject. The first topic which has been opened by the debate has been the Report of the Commission of the noble Viscount, Lord Lee of Fareham. I say little about that, because it must be generally agreed that, except for any urgent points of detail with which the Secretary of State in his discretion may feel obliged to deal at once, any general action on the Report should be deferred until the Legislative Assembly at Simla has discussed it and until the Secretary of State is in possession, as he can only then be fully in possession, of the views of the Government of India upon the Report. It seems to me that this is wise on all grounds. The Government of India has to work with the Legislative Assembly, and, however much some of us may regret it, it is surely desirable that the advice of the Government of India on this subject should have the fullest possible weight, especially as the initiative in establishing this Commission came, as I gather, from the Secretary of State himself.

I join in all the appreciation that has been expressed to the Chairman of the Commission in regard to the promptness and rapidity with which they carried out their work. And let me add one observation concerning the Report of the Commission. It may relieve the financial difficulties of the superior Civil Services,

but it will not really do everything that is necessary for the welfare and good working of those Services. It is more than financial help that is required. The work, the outlook, the career, the future before them must influence men at present in the Services and men about to join the Services, and it is essential in the interests of India itself that we should do our utmost to maintain the spirit, the traditions and the efficiency of these Services as they have been known in the past. But the welfare of these Services is intimately bound up with the whole question of the reforms.

Now, there are many criticisms which were made at the time of the introduction of the reforms, and which have been made since, with which many noble Lords have much sympathy. It was said at the time that they were hastily constructed. It is undoubtedly the fact that they were imposed upon India. They were not the result of any growth or evolution of Indian institutions. We were then under the difficulties of the immediate legacies of the great war, and it has often been said, not without justice, that Parliament was somewhat rushed into passing these reforms. There are many other criticisms of the kind which have legitimately great weight, although not sufficient weight, in my opinion, was given to them at the time. There was no hearing for such criticisms at the time. On the other hand, we have to recognise the facts of the situation.

As Lord Ampthill has just pointed out, and as previous speakers have said, the fact is that the Government of India Act of 1919 was passed, and has been working for the last four or five years, and criticisms which were apt and appropriate enough during the period of consideration before that Act was passed, are open to be misunderstood at the present time. They are open to be misunderstood especially in India, where opinions and feelings are sensitive. When, for instance, it is argued as against further advance that the population is illiterate, Indian opinion reminds us that we knew that before we passed the 1919 Act. When it is urged that the electorates are narrow, again it is answered that that was all known before. When the caste system is brought up as an objection, and when Hindu and Moslem rivalry is spoken of, again we are legitimately reminded that

all these circumstances were known to us before the passing of the 1919 Act.

Therefore, I would plead for some discrimination in applying these criticisms to the present situation. They are much too apt to act as irritants. I regret it, but it is the case, and we had much better, in my judgment, accept the 1919 Act, and its having been in existence and working for the last four or five years, as facts, and as the foundation upon which we have to build for the future. It is all true. Diarchy was an experiment never tried elsewhere before. We chose to try it upon India, and the responsibility is ours. All these circumstances seem to me to point to a full and frank recognition—to which nobody gives more eloquent expression than the noble Marquess, Lord Curzon—of the fact that we are bound by what we have done, and must do our best loyally to help India on her way towards self-government.

I say this because I believe there is no greater need at the present moment than to restore confidence in India in our ability and our good intentions to carry out the pledges we have given. I believe that anything we can do now to restore confidence in our ability and our good intentions to carry out loyally our pledges to India, to see her in her own interests through this difficult transition period, will do more to act as a solvent, and as a powerful aid in all these minor questions of detail and organisation, than anything concrete that we can do at the present moment.

I hesitate to intrude at any length upon your Lordships' time on this occasion, but I will say one word about the Civil Services, or perhaps I have said enough to indicate that I yield to nobody in my appreciation of what the Civil Services and British rule have done for India. But it is a task that is not finished, and we have still to carry on under more difficult conditions than have hitherto existed, if we are to discharge our responsibility to that country. I have urged that we should do everything we can to restore confidence. Let us recognise also that besides giving these constitutional reforms to India we have done our very utmost to awaken the political self-consciousness of India. We have, of our own act, admitted India through her representatives to the Imperial Conference and to Versailles.

Lord Pentland.

All that has tended, perhaps in an exaggerated degree, but nevertheless in a real degree, to awaken and give force to the political consciousness of India. Having done that, we have got to recognise it and take it by the hand, and try to guide it, and it is no use at this time trying to turn the tide back and suppress it. These two facts will have to be recognised—the grant (shall we say?) of these reforms, and the strenuous efforts made by our Government here to awaken the self-consciousness of India and to put her, theoretically at least, on a par with our self-governing Dominions.

These being the facts, what can we do? Are there any practical steps that we can take in relation to these reforms—for I confine myself to the reforms at present—to give effect to what I believe are our real intentions? I hesitate to suggest definite steps, because I have left India for five years, and I know how easy it is to get out of touch with Indian opinion and Indian conditions, but I suggest three steps in which action may be possible. In the first place, with regard to the Elections, I think it should be carefully considered and examined whether the electorates, or the different elected bodies, are serving the purpose of truly representing the opinion of India. The Council of State, for instance, was deliberately, and I am willing to admit wisely, constructed in order to represent powerful interests of men with a large stake in the country. I pass briefly over those matters because there is no time to examine them fully.

Now I come to the Imperial Legislative Assembly. It has been suggested—and there may be force in the criticism—that in that Assembly the interests of what goes by the name of the *intelligentsia* unduly outweigh agricultural and provincial interests. If that is so, that is a point which may well be examined within the limits of the present Constitution. It is remarkable to find, when you come to the Provincial Assemblies, that opinion there is less urban, that it is more general and more diluted with the representation of other interests. Then I come to the Central Government. We all agree that, for the great central interests of India—foreign affairs, defence, relations with native States, the maintenance of a uniform system of law throughout India, banking and commercial interests, and there may

be others—it is essential, for the sake of India herself, that a strong Government should not only be maintained, but maintained in full strength. It seems to me of great importance that everything that is possible should be done within these limits to make Indians feel that it is their own Government, and that we maintain this Central Government in its full strength as a guarantee for the orderly progress of India towards full responsible government.

Next take the Provincial Governments. We have heard during this discussion a great deal about the misgovernment, and the difficulty of government, in the Central Provinces and in Bengal, but, so far as I have been present, we have heard nothing about Provinces where the reforms have been creditably worked, where there has been substantial evidence of an honest and loyal intention to work the reforms, and where, in the exercise of that intention, there has been displayed a considerable measure of sound sense and political judgment. Surely that drives home to us what has been repeatedly pointed out, and what was too much forgotten in the initiation of these reforms—namely, that the whole of India is not on the same level of political knowledge and achievement, or the same level of intellectual advancement? Is it too late to recognise that in our practical politics? If the Government of India is to be placed in the position so-to-speak of guiding and nursing India to a fuller realisation of self-government, surely it is reasonable to suggest that Provinces which have worked the machine well should be given opportunities of an extension of the area of their working? Given safeguards for the depressed classes, given safeguards for any special difficulties peculiar to such Provinces, could there be a better guarantee of good faith on our part, could there be any greater encouragement to India on its path of self-realisation, than to discriminate between such Provinces as Madras, Bombay, and, I understand, the United Provinces and possibly Bihar and Orissa (I cannot speak for them, but I suggest them as worthy of consideration), and Provinces which have not succeeded in working the reforms so well?

When I say that the difference of Provinces was not recognised in the initiation of these reforms, let me safeguard myself against criticism by saying

that I know well that in certain Provinces certain Departments were not Transferred Subjects, and that there was a certain measure of discrimination. But I would urge that in regard to the electorates, in regard to the Central Government, and especially in regard to these Provinces which have loyally and successfully endeavoured to work the reforms, there should be some special consideration shown in the steps to be taken now by the Government in India. I cannot conceive any method by which more encouragement could be given, or a more hopeful view held out to the peoples of India, than such action. And I submit, with all respect, that it is impossible—and, if not impossible, unwise—for us to take other than a hopeful view of the situation in India. We may have made mistakes, but they are mistakes which can be repaired, above all if we can succeed in restoring throughout India a sense of our ability and good intention to pursue the path to which we are pledged, if we can make some immediate advance in any direction which seems favourable, and if we can abandon our habit, to which we are all too prone, of raking up objections which are out of date, and which are misinterpreted as showing reluctance on our part to carry out our pledges.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, I have listened to every word of this debate on the two days for which it has lasted, culminating in the sympathetic, although perhaps in some respects rather over-sanguine, opinions to which we have just listened from the noble Lord, Lord Pentland. It will not be denied that the pivot of this debate is necessarily the speech which was delivered by the Secretary of State ten days ago. Coming as it did from the lips of the Minister of the Crown who is mainly responsible for the Government of India, it was, in my judgment, in some respects which it will be my duty to point out, an extraordinary speech. It was a speech, as I know, which has created apprehension, if not dismay, in some quarters, and from a very careful study of the Press both here and in India, I have not discovered that it has met with the approval even of those whom it was intended to placate.

In one respect I hope the noble Lord will forgive me if I say that he placed

us at some disadvantage. On these occasions it is the more ordinary practice for a noble Lord representing the Government to give an opportunity to all those who, with authority, may desire to speak or to interrogate him before he replies; but after my noble friends Lord Peel and Lord Lee had completed their observations the other day, the noble Lord, Lord Olivier, rose at once and for an hour and a half spoke to us—I am not certain that it would not be truer to say that he read to us—an oration which effectually closed the discussion and postponed the reply that might be desired to be given by any of us on this side, for a period of ten days. I recognise the desire of the noble Lord on that occasion to put the views of the Government before the country and before India as soon as possible, but some of us would have liked his procedure to have been more in conformity with our ordinary practice.

The subjects over which the speech of the Secretary of State and the whole of the subsequent discussion have ranged have been these. Firstly, there was the Report of the Commission presided over by my noble friend Lord Lee of Fareham. Next, there was the situation in India, in Bengal and elsewhere, and the proceedings and personality of Mr. Das. And finally, there was the policy of the Government in respect of all these particulars. I hope your Lordships will allow me to make a few observations on each of these points. The first I take is the Report of the Commission of Lord Lee. I join in the tributes of congratulation and admiration that have been offered to him from all quarters both as to the rapidity of the work of his Commission, as to the completeness of their labours, and as to the unanimity of their Report. It was a remarkable achievement for a man visiting India, I am inclined to think, for the first time and at a time when opinion was a good deal divided and when many people thought that it would be quite impossible to arrive at an agreed result. It was a remarkable achievement; but it is only fair to add that, as the noble Lord himself has told us, it is the essence of his proposals, the proposals of himself and of his colleagues, that they should be taken as a whole. Indeed, I think he somewhere used the words "a treaty" as having

been in some measure concluded between the different parties. It is in that aspect, I think, that we here ought to regard it.

There are only three features of his Report about which I ask leave to say a word in passing. The first is that of the concessions as regards pay, allowances, passage-money, pensions and the like, which the Commission proposes should be granted. I was glad to note that the Secretary of State described these as moderate and reasonable, and I hope from his use of those words that we may anticipate that he, at any rate, will use his best efforts to see that they are put into operation. May I say, since the point has been raised, that these concessions will amount to a crore or a crore and a half, I think I heard the words used—

VISCOUNT LEE OF FAREHAM: A crore and a quarter.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: A crore and a quarter. I think that is but a small price to pay for the recovery of the contentment of your Services and for the rendering of what I, at any rate, regard as an elementary act of justice. Surely there can be no compunction among all right thinking people in making a concession such as this when we have only to read what passes in India and to see that many crores of money are being thrown away at Delhi in constructing the new quarters of Government with a degree of recklessness and profuseness for which I at any rate can find no excuse.

The other points which struck me very forcibly in the Report of the noble Viscount are these. Firstly, the proposal that a Public Service Commission should be constituted to recruit and control the All-India Services in the future. That seems to me to be a very valuable safeguard. But when the noble Viscount and his colleagues go on to urge that this body should be composed of five men of the highest public standing, detached from political associations, two of them possessed of high judicial and legal qualifications, while I entirely agree with him I wonder where they are to be found. I wonder whether in India or in England you will be able to obtain the men who, for the kind of salary you can give them, will undertake this critical and responsible job. Anyhow, whether the personnel of

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this Commission be English, or Indian, or whether it be composite, I urge my noble friend the Secretary of State, when it comes to a question of creating this Commission, to spare no effort and, I may add, to spare no money to get the right men upon it, for upon the choice of the right men, believe me, will depend the success of this great change.

The second point about which I desire to say only a word is the proposal that the Provincial Governments should in future recruit and appoint the *personnel* of all the Transferred Departments. I wonder how that will work in practice. I wonder whether the Provincial Governors, of whom several have spoken in this debate, can look with perfect confidence to the working of such a scheme. Will Englishmen of the right type come forward in response to this appeal? Will they amalgamate and co-operate with their Indian brethren? Will you get the same type of man in the Transferred Services thus recruited as you have hitherto done in the Indian Civil Service as a whole? I devoutly hope this may be the case, but I must take this opportunity of saying that I am far from sanguine and that it may even be that this proposal, put forward with the best intentions rather on the lines of what my noble friend Lord Pentland suggested, may ultimately end in extruding the greater part of the Englishmen in the Transferred Services of the local Governments altogether.

I agree with my noble friend Lord Pentland in one respect. He said: "Do not criticise this proposal only from the financial point of view. The real test is what will be its effect upon the Services." Will it enable them to continue as they have done before the great work to which he and others have paid such a splendid tribute? None of us who have served in India looks back with anything but pride and gratitude upon his connection with that Service, even where we did not belong to it. Certainly, it is the proudest reminiscence in my life that for nearly seven years I was the official head of that Service. I can truthfully say that at that time, now nearly a quarter of a century ago, the Indian Civil Service was distinguished above all others I believe in the world, not merely by its capacity, efficiency and integrity, but by the spirit

of enthusiasm for the work and the country by which it was inspired. They looked to the Government of India, and they looked more particularly to the Viceroy as their protector and head, and certainly he, and I think the Secretary of State at home, always felt it a particular obligation resting upon themselves to defend the interests of those of their countrymen without whose labours neither of them would ever have effected anything.

What has passed in the interval? We have often heard attacks made upon Englishmen in India—sometimes, perhaps, with too much justification—for a harsh attitude towards the natives. But what has been the attitude of the natives? I do not use the word in an invidious sense. What has been the attitude of large sections of the Indian population towards the Indian Civil Servant during the past few years? Many of these men have been the target of misrepresentation, of abuse, of political intrigue. From what has transpired in the course of this debate I am afraid that many of them, though whether justly or not it is not for me to say, have not had that support and protection from the headquarters of Government in India upon which they formerly relied. Their financial position has been getting steadily worse, and all the while, at the back of their minds, has been the carking uncertainty as to their future.

The result is—you cannot deny it, it comes out in the Report of the noble Viscount, Lord Lee of Fareham—that that kind of enthusiasm of which I have been speaking has been dying out, and, while the better men of the Service have gone away from India, the best men from the Universities have not gone out from here. Take the Indian Medical Service alone—a splendid service which in my day the best men from the medical schools competed to enter. It is killed and dead, and the utmost that the noble Viscount, Lord Lee of Fareham, has been able to do is to propose its resuscitation in another form. Bear in mind in all your criticisms, and in all your actions, the effect that they are going to produce upon your Civil Service. I deplore the attempt that is made in some quarters to break it down, and I say that any money that you can spend upon it in securing their contentment, in maintaining their high level, in inducing them to go out and work

in India, will be repaid ten thousand times over in the efficiency of your administration.

What is the attitude of the Government of India, or rather of the Secretary of State, upon the subject of Lord Lee's Report? I do not take quite the same view of it that was urged just now by Lord Pentland. The Report was presented in the month of May. The Legislative Assembly was sitting in India in the month of June. There was no reason whatever, so far as I can see, why it should not have discussed it. But no: the discussion was postponed. It was put off till the next meeting in September, and the Secretary of State told us the other day that before a decision can be arrived at the Secretary of State in Council has to consider it, the Governor-General in Council has to consider it; they have to consider it with the Provincial Governments, and they have to consider it with the members of the Legislative Assembly; and he does not anticipate that final orders will be issued till six months after the issue of the Report. That means until the month of December.

Thus we arrive at this position. These recommendations have been made, and somehow or other, at this moment, a fatal inertia seems to have settled down upon everybody. Nobody can make up their minds what they are going to do, except the Swarajists. My noble friend asked if we could not get the Legislative Assembly to say what they think about the proposal. I would point out to him that they have told us in advance what they think. We know perfectly well that when the proposals come before the Legislative Assembly they will denounce them, probably in every respect, certainly in regard to their financial cost, and I should not be surprised if they take such steps in the Assembly as to force the Viceroy to certify the grant of these sums in exercise of his executive authority.

I think that at an early stage the Secretary of State himself said that there were points of urgency with which he had the power and ability to deal. If that be so, why does he not deal with them? Why does he not deal with them at once? Pray believe me when I say that every month you allow to pass before action is taken will create and multiply the points of divergence until, eventually, when you come to Delhi in September, and come to a decision in December, you may find

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it very difficult then to carry what you could without difficulty effect now. Meantime, while all this hesitation and uncertainty goes on, the fibre of your Service is getting weakened. The men's spirits are getting disheartened, and recruitment will stand still. I urge the Secretary of State for India to show a little more energy and keenness in dealing with this matter, and I should like to hear from my noble friend Lord Chelmsford, if he is going to reply, that there are certain respects in which action can be taken on the Report of Lord Lee's Commission without delay.

I pass to the situation in India. I must say that I have not gathered from this debate that there is in your Lordships' House at all an adequate appreciation of the seriousness of the position in India at the present time as my information leads me to believe that it exists. Take the Province of Bengal. There is, in the first place, the local political situation arising out of the action of the Swarajist Party which is in a majority on the Legislative Council. We have been told that the Legislative Council has refused supplies for the greater number of the Reserved Subjects, that they have declined to pay salaries to the Ministers, and that, in consequence, notices have had to be given to several hundreds of employees in several Departments, notably the Education Department. Lord Lytton, the Governor, is, we are told, going to submit these salaries again in a few weeks' time. Supposing they are again refused, what is he going to do, and what is the Secretary of State going to do, in such a situation?

But the situation in Bengal is not confined to the local political situation in the Councils; it is much more serious. Yesterday I read, in a communication to the *Daily Telegraph* from their correspondent in Calcutta, this passage which I ask your Lordships' leave to read:

"There is startling proof in support of the police theory that the revolutionary party of Bengal, encouraged by the recent drift in Nationalist politics towards methods of violence, is preparing another campaign of terrorism. The following document, signed 'President in Council, Red Bengal,' was received yesterday by the Commissioner and Deputy-Commissioners of Police, and a score of prominent officers of the C.I.D., Judges of the High Court, and editors of leading European newspapers:

'The public is hereby informed that the Bengal Revolutionary Council has

passed a resolution deciding on a campaign of ruthless assassination of police officers. Any one actively or passively obstructing our comrades, when in action or retiring, or helping the Government by taking prosecution briefs from the Government or giving evidence when any such comrades are in the hands of the Government shall be considered as doing an act highly prejudicial to the best interests of the country. From the moment that any such action is taken by any one he shall be considered condemned by us to be immediately despatched."

This document, headed by a picture of the Hindu Goddess Kali, "the Destroyer," was posted to several officers of the special branch at their private addresses, and in addition to the posted copies a large number of leaflets were posted on the walls of public buildings and lamp standards.

Mr. Tegart, a Commissioner of Police, on whose life several attempts have recently been made, says this:

"Despite the probability that the Extremist Press will dismiss the leaflet as a hoax or the idle threat of a few lunatics, the authorities regard the matter as of serious importance. Not since 1915, when a succession of outrages followed, have such leaflets been issued."

That statement is not an invention of the Press; it is not a figment of the imagination. It is true. It represents the actual condition of affairs existing in Bengal at the present time, and I am certain that the Secretary of State will be the last to deny it. The fact is there is a revival in Bengal at the present moment of the old revolutionary party, the methods of which are procedure by assassination, by bombs, and by terrorism. Their object is to pick off these police officers one by one. As you know, the life of this officer has been attempted more than once, and the poor European merchant who was killed in the streets of Calcutta was mistaken for a police officer who would otherwise have been done to death.

This organisation exists; it is amply supplied with funds. At this moment it is tearing at the foundations of your rule and government in Bengal, and the leader of the Extreme Party, whose exact connection with this policy it is not for me to say, is this gentleman Mr. Das, to whom the noble Lord, the Secretary of State, went out of his way to pay a superfluous and unprecedented tribute in your Lordships' House. Will your Lordships allow

me, because I do not want to misrepresent him, to read the actual words which the Secretary of State employed. Referring to the Conference of the Bengal Extremists which passed a resolution condoning the murder of this young European merchant in Calcutta, the noble Lord said:

"In the episode . . . Mr. Das appears unquestionably to have associated himself with the support of a resolution which, although it did not expressly go so far as to approve the assassination of Mr. Day, expressed an admiration for the character and motives of the assassin which has been, and not unnaturally, generally interpreted as implying a commendation of his deed. After the resolution referred to had appeared in the Press in its actual original form, an amended and altered version of it was published, touched up by inserting a phrase intended to dissociate the eulogy from the character of the action itself, and to confine it to the motives and mentality of the assassin."

I have here a subsequent resolution or amendment moved by Mr. Das himself at a meeting of the Congress in which he openly expressed his appreciation of the murderer's ideals and self-sacrifice and expressed his respect for this great self-sacrifice.

The self-sacrifice of a man who goes and shoots an Englishman in the streets! Such was the action; and then the Secretary of State goes on to give the view of His Majesty's Government upon this class of procedure. In the words which were quoted just now by Lord Sydenham he says:

"It is not necessary for the British Government to assume in this connection an attitude of high moral condemnation of Mr. Das as a politician on this account. The operations of secret murder societies are detestable, and occasionally, in their effects, atrocious. They impose a constant strain on the vigilance of the police. But they are not in themselves a political force, nor do they ultimately strengthen any political Party that dallies with them. It has been the continual policy of the Party to which I belong to repudiate and condemn all such forcible methods, quite independently of their moral turpitude, on the ground of their foolishness and their futility."

Yes, they are to be condemned because of their futility and because they are foolish, but they are not to be allowed to incur the moral condemnation of His Majesty's Government!

If you go from the actions and the policy to the man, let me remind your

Lordships what the Secretary of State did say about this Mr. Das. This is what he said:

"I am informed by a high authority in Indian politics that he has the reputation of being a particularly upright and scrupulous politician, second only to Gandhi himself in saintliness of character. He is unquestionably a man of high and admirable ideals"—

I have just read out to your Lordships the idealism of this saintly individual—

"on behalf of his country which he has finely and uncompromisingly expressed. . . . The political attitude and proceedings of Mr. Das, in the light of all the study that I have been able to make of them, appear to me to present a typical illustration of methods and reactions quite familiar in the development of a struggle for political evolution in the direction of self-governing national institutions."

Then the noble Lord went on to define these methods as an appeal to organised force, or, failing this, to secret methods, and pointed out how successful they had been in the case of Ireland.

He went on to say that the theory upon which these actions arose was that "Great Britain will never do anything unless there is a threat of armed force, and will always do something if there is a threat of armed force." These words of the Secretary of State speak for themselves. It was with a gasp of horror and surprise that most persons read this language emanating from a Minister of the Crown. This saintly man whose attitude is one of high idealism is the leader of the Party whose avowed object it is to reduce British Government to contempt and, indeed, to render all foreign government in India impossible. He is the man who has, in the language I have referred to, openly condoned the crime of political murder and applauded the character and motives of the assassin. He has even gone so far that he has had to be repudiated by the section of the Nationalist Party that is led by Mr. Gandhi. I do not say that the language of the Secretary of State amounted—I am sure he would repudiate it—to an actual condonation of the action or the morals of Mr. Das, but I do say that language of that kind, incautiously used here, is an encouragement to a repetition of these acts of violence in India, and that when there is a recrudescence of this trouble, as there will be probably within the next two or three months, men will point to the speech of the Secretary of

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State and say: "He practically told us that this is the only way by which we can get what we desire."

As I heard these remarks I could not help wondering what Viscount Chelmsford, who was sitting on the Ministerial Bench, was thinking all the time. I could not help wondering what I should have thought of them if, when I was Viceroy of India, I was confronted with this sort of difficulty, if I had had that type of encouragement from the Secretary of State. I wonder what is thought about it by the Government of India, and here, fortunately, we have some clue, for I read a day or two ago, in a communication from the same correspondent of the same newspaper, the *Daily Telegraph*, words which I will read to your Lordships. Let me first remark that this Mr. Das is coming to England and will shortly be here. The correspondent writes:

"It is not necessary to dot the 'i's' of the communication sent by the Governor-General in Council to the Press on Friday, wherein His Excellency"—

that is, Lord Reading—

"expressly denies that the Government of India had been consulted about the suggestion that Mr. Das should now visit England, as the present was a suitable time for political agitation. There has not been the slightest change at Simla in the attitude of the Indian Government towards sedition as the result of Lord Olivier's condonation of violence—"

LORD OLIVIER: May I ask the noble Marquess what he understands, or intends to suggest, by that quotation to the effect that there is no necessity "to dot the 'i's'"? It may be that he is making a mistake as to what has happened.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: That may be; I do not know. All that appears from this passage is that the Governor-General in Council has thought it necessary to send a communication to the Press. I know nothing about it.

LORD OLIVIER: What was the communication to the Press to which the noble Marquess referred?

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I was reading the passage, and, if the noble Lord will allow me—

LORD OLIVIER: Do, please. I should like to hear this out.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: If he will allow me to finish, it will be for him to make inquiries as to whether the reference is correct or not. I have no information, but this is what I read:

"It is not necessary to dot the 'i's' of the communication sent by the Governor-General in Council to the Press on Friday, wherein His Excellency expressly denies that the Government of India had been consulted about the suggestion that Mr. Das should now visit England, as the present was a suitable time for political agitation."

That is the statement which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* two days ago from its special correspondent at Simla.

LORD OLIVIER: I suggest that, if the noble Marquess wishes to convey anything to the House by what he has read, it is for him to say what he means by "dotting the i's"? What interpretation would be put upon that? If he would inform me, I am prepared to tell him whether it is the proper interpretation or not.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Of the dotting of the i's? I do not know—

LORD OLIVIER: Will the noble Marquess say whether it is relevant to what the Government of India thinks?

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I really think that the noble Lord is entirely off the point. I am reading a statement which has appeared in the Press, the authority for which is not my own but that of a correspondent at Simla well known to many of your Lordships. He communicates to us that which is news to me, that a certain communication has been made to the Press by the Governor-General in Council. I read it to the noble Lord. It is for the noble Lord to make inquiries as to whether that communication is here correctly described or not, but it would appear, if the correspondent is correct and if this communication has had to be sent, that the Government of India are rather alarmed at the suggestion that Mr. Das is coming to England at the present time with a view to having a consultation with the Secretary of State.

LORD OLIVIER: There is no foundation whatever for such a suggestion.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: Very well. In that case, I am rather surprised that the Government of

India should have gone out of their way to deny it. On this branch of the subject I will only add this. In view of what I have said about that which is passing in Bengal, in view of what I have said about Mr. Das, in view of the position in which our people are placed in India, I think it would have been better the other day if the Secretary of State, instead of giving a sort of certificate to Mr. Das, had spoken a few words of encouragement to our own men in India whose lives are in danger, who look to the Secretary of State for support and who might have expected something better from him than a tribute to the saintly character of a man who is connected with those who are plotting their assassination.

There is another respect in which the attitude of the Secretary of State appears to me to be similarly open to criticism. I am alluding to the points, more than once mentioned in this debate, regarding that which is passing in the Central Provinces and in Bengal. I have already mentioned the events in Bengal. In the Central Provinces there has been similar action. The Legislative Council has refused to consider any measures of Government, it has refused to make any grants for the ensuing financial year, the Government has had to take over all the Transferred Departments and the Legislative Council is actually not now functioning. When the noble Lord spoke of these matters the other day he seemed to regard it, I will not say as a thing that was not regrettable, but as a rather natural thing to happen in the circumstances, and he seemed to think that all that had to be done was for the Government, whether in Bengal or in the Central Provinces, to deal with this matter by Executive Decree.

But does the noble Lord not see that if this action takes place in these two Provinces—and, believe me, if it takes place there it will shortly take place elsewhere—the whole scheme of reform associated with the name of the noble Viscount who is sitting beside him has broken down absolutely, and that not only has diarchy gone but that the whole scheme of democratic government is vitiated at the start? When that scheme was started, how often did I not listen to speeches in which noble Lords who advocated it

said that the days of benevolent despotism in India were over; that it was very well for the past, and very well indeed was it exercised, but that we now had finer ideals and more modern conceptions! And yet here you are, in the third year after these reforms were started, having in two of the principal Provinces of India to fall back upon the benevolent despotism which you have destroyed in order to get yourself out of the difficulties which the reforms have caused. I am not, of course, for a moment bringing the reforms as a reproach against the noble Lord—I would not be so unjust—but I am pointing out the situation to which the collapse of the reforms has brought us, and the singular anomaly of the position that we are actually drifting to a point at which we can extract ourselves from the difficulty only by turning the Provincial Governments of India into executive authorities to carry on government independently of the reforms which they have been instructed to pursue.

I pass for a moment—it shall not be long—to the question of the attitude of the Government of India to the main question of the extension or otherwise of the reform scheme. Let your Lordships realise what the position is. In 1919 we gave to India *con amore*, with generous intention, a large and liberal scheme of reform. I agree with that which Lord Pentland has said that we cannot go back upon our word. We must be true to that, and we must endeavour not only to make it succeed in Provinces where it has already attained some partial success—and there are such Provinces—but we must endeavour to remove obstacles to its success in places where it has failed. But ever since that scheme was introduced a deliberate effort has been made to break it down, to prove that the scheme is impossible and to force the Government to give a full measure of self-government without delay.

What is the attitude of the Government in this respect? We were first led to believe that they proposed to set up a Committee of Inquiry—as, indeed, they did—in order to ascertain what blemishes or defects there might be in the Act, with a view to amending it by the exercise of their Rule-making power, and the representative of the Government at Delhi said that the inquiry did not extend beyond that scope to the amend-

ment of the Constitution as it was. But presently the Government began to be squeezed. A larger Committee, containing many non-official members, was appointed, and we were told by the Secretary of State, in his speech ten days ago, that this Committee was to inquire “whether there are any defects in the working of the Act in its effect on the work of the Government, which can be remedied by alterations in the structure of the Act itself, without really altering the principle of the Constitution.”

And then he went on to say—and these words are very ominous—

“I cannot deny that if the result of the labours of that Committee should be to find that there are certain defects in the working of government under the provisions of that Act, which apparently cannot be remedied by any amendment of Rules, or by any amendments of the Act short of an alteration of the Constitution, then a question would arise as to whether any further steps should or ought to be taken for dealing with the question as to whether any further constitutional advance can be contemplated.”

Again, he said:—

“it is just possible that the result of this Inquiry may impose upon them”—

that is, His Majesty's Government—

“the duty of coming to such a conclusion—that is to say, as to whether some steps should or should not be taken to re-examine the constitutional position.”

Here again the Government seem to me to be hanging out a sort of signal to the advanced Nationalist Party in India that they are ready for some sort of deal.

I think that is a most unwise suggestion. It is going far beyond what they contemplated themselves in the first place, and I am not certain that it is not open to another criticism—namely, that it contemplates taking from Parliament that which was laid down in 1919 as being the sole function and duty of Parliament. I think some noble Lord quoted the words of Article 41 of the Act which says that the reopening of this question and the appointment of a Commission to enquire whether further advance ought to be made is a matter for Parliament. The suggestion made by the noble Lord seemed to indicate that there is to be some sort of arrangement or proposal upon the point. I hope the noble Lord will at least remember the terms of that Act, and realise that nothing can be done without the consent of Parliament, and

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that the prerogative then laid upon us was not one that we have the slightest intention of abandoning.

Before I conclude I only want to make an observation or two upon the general situation in India. I said just now that I thought its seriousness was not thoroughly realised in this country, and I will explain what I mean. Five years have now elapsed since the reforms of 1919 were first foreshadowed. Four years have elapsed since the Act was passed and the reforms came into operation in India. What can we say as to their results? It seems quite clear that they have not satisfied the legitimate aspirations of those for whom they were intended. On the contrary, they have encouraged and embittered their hostility. They have dispirited and alienated the Indian Civil Services. They have produced a general impression in India of weakness on the part of the Central Government. I am not aware that you can point to a single class of the population of India that has benefited by the introduction of the reforms, and in many parts they have led to that shocking recrudescence of racial and caste antagonisms to which a noble Lord on this side alluded.

This is a very serious situation. Your new Councils, which were supposed to be the highest expression of democratic principles, are breaking down. At Delhi they have openly voted against the Government, and in two other Provinces they have brought government to a standstill. The policy of civil disobedience is being widely preached, and is not distinguishable from revolution. In Bengal you have revived the campaign of assassination and terrorism to which I have referred, and everywhere throughout the country in India you have got the feeling fermenting that the old restraint of the British Raj is being withdrawn, and old animosities and feuds can now safely be revived. Look at what is passing, or has passed, at Delhi, in Calcutta and in the Punjab. In one case you have Moslems against Hindus. In another case Moslems against Sikhs, and in another case Sikhs against Hindus. All the old passions of the ancestral cauldron are boiling up again, and you see what is at the back of it all. What democracy means to these shrewd people who look below the surface is not a fair chance for the Moslems, but

Hindu ascendancy, which means Brahmin ascendancy, and that means the ascendancy of a highly accomplished oligarchy framed on the strictest lines of creed and caste.

Somehow we have got to the position where all these old feelings are being revived, and where all our best efforts to create popular institutions seems to be crumbling in our hands. It is a desperate confession to make, and it is a confession the fault for which I do not attempt to lay upon one Party more than another—perhaps it ought to be equally distributed—but at least consider how we are going to meet it. I have listened to all the speeches delivered in this debate, and there is one point on which they have been absolutely at one. I am not including Lord Pentland's remarks, when he suggested that in certain respects which he indicated he thought that in some Provinces advances might be made, or reforms might be introduced, but broadly speaking every noble Lord who has taken part in this debate has come to this conclusion—that the time has arrived when the Government ought to stand firm; that some definite statement of how far we can go and are willing to go ought to be made; and that if the Government cannot say that, at any rate you ought to say the point beyond which we decline to go.

If we could get some definite pronouncement from His Majesty's advisers I believe that the best moderate opinion, not only in this country but in India, would rally to their support. What are the Government going to do? Are they going to embark once again, as it is such a temptation to Governments to do, upon a course of vacillation here and compromise there, and surrender somewhere else—a policy of drift all round? If they do that they will go from bad to worse. A policy of drift in India, believe me, is a policy not merely of despair but of destruction. The whole bases of the fabric that we have reared for a century and a half in India are, I will not say shaken, but are being imperilled. For the first time a deliberate effort is being made by a powerful section of the community—powerful even though they be numerically small—into whose hands you have placed the power, to get rid of you out of the country altogether. That, as every speaker allows, means disaster and damnation, not only to us but to India itself.

That process can only be arrested, believe me, by some measure of unity among ourselves, by strong pronouncements and definite action on the part of the Government, supported, as you will be, by every section of the community, both in England and in India. I am going to be followed by a noble Viscount who has filled the same post which I once had the honour to occupy. I am sure he will realise the force of what I have been endeavouring, however imperfectly, to point out, and I look forward to receiving from him some statement which will indicate that, by a policy of refusal to have any truck with conspiracy, by a policy of firmness, not unattended by conciliation, by a policy that will reconcile and revive the enthusiasm of our own Services, we may hope to recover the ground that has been lost, and to look forward with some confidence to a future which I admit, as I regard it, is heavily clouded at the present time.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (VISCOUNT CHELMSFORD): My Lords, any one who has to follow the noble Marquess, with his unrivalled authority and the perfection of his presentation of a case, suffers under a very grave disadvantage. It is a misfortune in which I am placed that I have to attempt to follow him, and I shall endeavour to put before your Lordships a plain and unvarnished tale with regard to various points of issue in this debate. The debate has covered a wide field, but I think I may take four points on which I may give the House information with regard to the attitude of the Government. Let me record what those points are: First of all, the subject of the Lee Report; in the second place, the working of the reformed Constitution; in the third place, the activities of the revolutionaries; and, in the fourth place, the situation in the Punjab.

Taking the question of the Report of my noble friend Lord Lee, my noble friend, when he was addressing your Lordships, made a quotation from a speech of mine when I was Viceroy of India. I well recollect the circumstances in which I made that speech, and that the words in which I couched my utterance were very carefully weighed and considered. I can tell him now, as, of course, I told the Legislative Assembly at that time, that I accept the principles underlying that speech in their entirety, and I recognise

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no qualifications with regard to the principles which I laid down in it. I will not trouble your Lordships with the utterance which I delivered on that occasion, for it is to be found in the noble Lord's speech in the OFFICIAL REPORT of the last debate, but I can only say from my place here to-night that I adhere, literally and in principle, to everything that I said then.

With regard to the problem of the British Services in India, a continuous misfortune seems to have dogged all our attempts to deal with the question. In the first place, Lord Islington's Report was issued just at the outbreak of war. It was considered in India at that time—I was not then Viceroy—that it was unwise to attempt to deal with it so long as the war was on. I arrived in 1916, and I felt that this situation could not continue, that even though it might be impossible to deal with the Report as a whole at all events the examination of the proposals in that Report might well go on. So I took up the questions in Lord Islington's Report at once. But I must make a confession that, having only lately arrived in India, I think I made a grave mistake with regard to the treatment of the examination of that Report. I was over-urged that the examination of it should proceed according to the usually accepted, prevailing system of Departmental and Provincial examination. I must plead guilty to having made that error of judgment, because, as everyone knows, it was some two or three years before we were able to come to our final conclusions on that Report.

I may say that I think I profited by that experience later during my time of office, because, when the great Report on the industrial development of India was made by the Committee over which Sir Thomas Holland presided, I determined that we must have a more expeditious mode of dealing with these great Reports, and I immediately sent round a Secretary of Government direct to the various Provincial Governments, to explain the recommendations of that Report, and to nail them down to their conclusions with regard to those recommendations. Similarly, when we received those, I sent home an officer of Government straight to the Secretary of State to get his sanction to what the Government of India had determined. In that way we disposed of that great Report, I think, in something like

two to three months, and we got the sanction of the Secretary of State to what we had done. I have urged my noble friend the Secretary of State that he should endeavour to get some expeditious form of that sort used with regard to the Lee Report, so that we could get an answer as soon as possible.

There were two misfortunes—first, the war intervened, and delay undoubtedly took place in the examination of that Report; secondly, as the Secretary of State mentioned in his speech the other day, when we at headquarters were examining the problem the rupee at that moment stood at something like 2s. 8d. to the £. The Committee which had been appointed to deal with the rupee had fixed the rupee at 2s. and promised us in their Report that that was what the value of the rupee was likely to stand at in the future. Your Lordships can well see that recommendations with regard to salaries, with the rupee at 2s. 8d., or certainly at 2s., were recommendations which must be dealt with in a very different manner from when the rupee was standing at 1s. 4d. The whole problem of the cost of journeys would be almost halved for the civil servant. The cost of remission home to England, similarly, would be greatly lessened. We frankly thought at that time that the question of the salaries really did not arise, that the Indian Civil Service, with the rupee standing at that figure, would be in a very admirable position. Then, as we all know, the rupee fell again to 1s. 4d. subsequent to our recommendation; hence all the trouble in which we find ourselves. I believe that on whichever side of the House we sit we are all agreed in substance with regard to the grave necessities of this problem, to the need for a remedy being applied, and upon the fact that the problem has to be tackled.

Now I come to the question of the method of tackling the problem and the time within which the problem should be tackled—two things which are really interdependent. I do not think there is really any substantial difference between my noble friend Lord Lee and myself and the noble Viscount, Lord Peel, with regard to the method by which this problem must be tackled. No one can doubt that there must be an examination of Lord Lee's Report. He would not pretend to regard it as so inspired that

we must accept it in every jot and tittle. Therefore, there must be an examination on the part of the Secretary of State, the Government of India and the Provincial Governments. But, so far at all events as India is concerned, I hope that a more expeditious method of examination may be adopted than those which have hitherto prevailed under the Government of India.

May I say a word about certain remarks which fell from the noble Viscount, Lord Lee, concerning the slowness of the working of the Government of India, because I am anxious that we should not do an injustice to the working of that great machine? Let me remind the noble Viscount and your Lordships' House of two facts in connection with the working of the Government of India, and, in the first place, of how small is the staff which is at the disposal of the great Departments there. Normally speaking, a great Department has the Member in charge, and he has a secretary, a deputy-secretary and an under-secretary, and that is the sum total of the thinking portion of the staff. Of course, there is a clerical staff. When one compares that staffing of a great Department with the staffing of great Departments in Whitehall one wonders how any work can be really got through at all, and one is amazed at the efficiency of the work which is done by the great Departments in India.

Let me remind your Lordships of another fact in regard to the staffing of the Secretariat in India. It has been held desirable, and it has come down for many, many years, that the higher staff of the secretariat should be recruited from the district administration. The underlying principle of that is that there should be close touch between the secretariat at headquarters and the district officer who is administering in the plains. It follows from this practice that it is not like our great Government Departments here in Whitehall, where a man enters, it may be, the Home Department at the age of twenty-three or twenty-four and for a period of forty years perhaps goes up through the same Department, a repository of all the knowledge of all the problems which are connected with the administration of that Department. In India, owing to the system of recruitment from the districts, you have to have minuting and recording of everything

that takes place in order that when a man comes in at the head of the office he shall be in a position to take up the complete story of the problem before him.

Every Viceroy has come up against the question of minuting. The noble Marquess who leads the Opposition was very emphatic upon the undesirability of this extensive minuting. But we have all fought, I think, a losing battle against the practice that has grown up, and it is very difficult to get away from the fact that unless you have a complete record the new man who comes in as deputy, or as head secretary, in the office has not a complete record of all that has gone before. That is by the way. I feel that, in justice to the Government of India, and, in fact, to the other Governments in India and the Civil Service there, one ought to remind your Lordships' House of the practice which prevails there and the difficulties under which the work is carried on.

Going back to the method, the Secretary of State told your Lordships the other day that he was doing everything he possibly could to get the whole case prepared for a speedy decision as soon as he received information from India as to their attitude towards it. Time, the second problem in the matter, is dependent, of course, on the method; but I think you may take it that if the procedure which the Secretary of State and I have indicated with regard to this Report is followed no time will be lost in dealing with the Report when the essential examination has taken place.

Now may I turn to the second of the subjects round which I said that this debate has turned; that is, the working of the reforms? I must say a word or two with regard to this matter because even the noble Marquess opposite who was a member of the Government which made the famous announcement of August, 1917, seemed to throw some doubt upon and to offer some criticisms against the reforms themselves. I would remind your Lordships that these reforms are the logical outcome of Macaulay's famous Minute of nearly a century ago. Macaulay laid it down that English was to be the medium of instruction and that India was to be introduced to all the literature and all the thought and ideals which belonged to the West, saying distinctly that in his mind practically all the Indian literature was valueless in

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face of one English book. I think that everything has followed logically upon that. When you have introduced Indians to Western civilisation through the medium of English instruction, and held out to them the Western ideals which they find in that literature as the best gift which we have it in our power to bestow, it is almost inevitable that they will make a demand for that gift.

I am not standing here at this Table, and I think few noble Lords or any one would stand here, to say that the policy underlying Macaulay's Minute can be regarded as the best policy that could have been pursued, and many Indians will say the same. But the point I would make, and which I would impress upon your Lordships, is that once that policy was initiated by means of that famous Minute, practically everything else followed as its logical outcome, because you had created in the minds of the educated Indian a desire to have those constitutional ideals which we had held out to them as the best thing that we could offer. And so we passed through certain preliminary stages. We have had the stages of the Acts of 1865 and 1892 and then we came to the Morley-Minto reforms. When, in 1916, that matter came to be considered, His Majesty's Government put a finger on the weakness of the Morley-Minto reforms. They said that they were merely creating a body of critics who had no powers; they merely had the power of criticising the Government; and that if we were to continue on those lines there was no real development except increasing the number of the critics, because you could only go straight from the Morley-Minto reforms into the full constitution of self-government, which was obviously an impossibility.

They said that if there were reforms there should be an introduction to responsibility. That was the basis of the great announcement of August, 1917. There were two principles in that announcement. I will not weary your Lordships with the full announcement; but, first, there was the progressive realisation of responsible government, and, secondly, progress was to be achieved by successive stages. When that announcement had been made the actual form of the Constitution which was adopted involved a diarchy, which, indeed, became absolutely inevitable. I may say

quite frankly that when Mr. Montagu came out to India he and I, when we made the tour of India, received deputations and had interviews with all classes of people—officials and politicians and anybody who had a right to have an interview. We explored every avenue which offered us any escape from this system of diarchy, but no other advance in reform could carry out the terms of our reference—namely, the announcement of August, 1917. We held that announcement of August, 1917, strictly before us as our terms of reference, and we considered all the various suggestions for advance strictly from that point of view—Were they or were they not consistent with the announcement of August, 1917?

As your Lordships know, the proposed Constitution came later under the scrutiny of the Committee presided over by my noble friend Lord Selborne. That Committee again, under his guidance, recognised that the Secretary of State at that time had strictly observed the terms of our reference—the terms of the announcement of August, 1917—and they saw no other way of making an advance in this matter of reform except through this diarchic system. Therefore, when we have the system of diarchy criticised, we must remember that that diarchical system was inevitable after the announcement of August, 1917, because the terms of that announcement made any other line of constitutional advance absolutely impossible. We explored every avenue, and we always came back to this: That if we were to follow the terms of the announcement of the Government of which the noble Marquess was a member we could not avoid following the diarchical method. I would remind the noble Marquess that Lord Selborne, when he presided over his Committee, came to absolutely the same conclusion.

THE MARQUESS CURZON OF KEDLESTON: I did not in my speech criticise or attack the diarchical system. I profoundly detest it if the noble Viscount wants to know. All I did was to point out that it had broken down.

VISCOUNT CHELMSFORD: I am prepared to argue that with the noble Marquess. Let us see how the diarchical system has worked, because we must take that name as a short and convenient way

of describing the form of constitution under which things are worked at present in India. I would remind your Lordships—this is familiar to the noble Marquess—that there are three Presidencies in India and five Provinces, *plus* Burma. We do not hear anything of the working of the Constitution in the Provinces other than the Central Provinces and Bengal, of which we have heard so much this afternoon, because, whatever the difficulties that arise from time to time in those other Provinces, those difficulties are inseparable from the introduction to responsibility which was the keynote of the policy of His Majesty's Government in 1917. You cannot offer responsibility and then expect them to follow slavishly the policy laid down by the Government of the particular Province. The whole object of offering responsibility is also the opportunity of making mistakes, and so I may say that with the exception of those two Provinces—the Central Provinces and Bengal—I think, on the whole, one may say that the Constitution is working.

Even when I come to the Central Provinces I would remind your Lordships that the Constitution embodied in the Act of Parliament is working. The noble Lord, Lord Meston, who opened the discussion this afternoon, alluded to the fact that safeguards had to be introduced into the Act of 1919 lest the experiment was wrecked through inexperience. Safeguards were introduced into that Act for that very purpose. I think the noble Marquess alluded to some of them in his speech in reference to the Central Provinces, where the local Legislative Council has refused to work the reforms as they are embodied in the Act. The safeguards embodied in the same Act have come into operation. It is, of course, an unfortunate thing, and is to be deplored, but the safeguards were intended to see that the administration should be carried on, even though the Constitution in its wider form was not carried on. I think the Secretary of State has already shown, in the speech that he has made, how the safeguards are capable of meeting the situation.

Again, with regard to Bengal, there is not a very dissimilar position. There it is complicated by the intervention of the judiciary, but that, we hope, has been corrected by the amendment of the Rules,

which the Secretary of State announced in his speech the other day. As to the question whether the position is only legal under the theory of emergency, I would remind your Lordships of what the Secretary of State said the other day, because it is obvious that the matter cannot be left where it stands, and the Government must explore how far it is possible to meet this situation, if it were to continue.

This is what the Secretary of State said in this relation:

"The question arises as to what procedure the Government should take to bring to an end this position in the Central Provinces and Bengal, which is only legal under the theory that it is a position of emergency; and the question also arises whether the Governor should exercise his power to suspend the transfer or revoke the transfer. That is now under the consideration of the Viceroy with the Governor of Bengal.

"VISCOUNT PEEL: And the Central Provinces?"

"LORD OLIVIER: Yes. The question as to what further course of action may be taken is now under consideration."

We cannot rush the consideration; but the matter is being gravely and seriously considered. Of course, it is disappointing to those who have looked forward to the fulfilment of the policy which was announced in 1917, and I would like, in this connection, to associate myself absolutely with what Viscount Peel said in opening this debate.

It is so important that it should be emphasised that I will venture to repeat it. He said this:

"I have always deeply regretted that the Indian politicians have not addressed themselves more vigorously to the work of carrying out the present Constitution. If they had diverted one-tenth of the energy they have shown in standing out of the Constitution, obstructing that Constitution and making the working of it difficult, India would now be far more advanced than it is at present on the road to constitutional reform and change."

Those are very true words. If the Indian people had devoted that energy to carrying out the Constitution as it was drawn in 1919, we should have a very different tale to tell. The truth is that it is not so much the form of Constitution that is important as the spirit in which it is worked; and that principle was emphasised by the Earl of Balfour in a previous debate in your Lordships' House.

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May I turn now to the question of Mr. Das and the revolutionary proceedings which have been mentioned by the noble Marquess? May I say quite plainly that it is the policy of the Government to leave full discretion to the Government on the spot to enforce the law? We shall support them in any action they feel it necessary to take in quelling a revolutionary movement. I wish it was sufficiently realised over here how difficult it is, at this distance from India, to form a sound and considered judgment on some of these problems such as are raised by the utterance of Mr. Das, which has been quoted so often in this House. The noble Viscount, Lord Peel, may form one inference on what is before him; the Secretary of State forms another inference from what is before him. But the truth is that when it comes to policy the only people who can form a correct inference are the people on the spot with all the facts before them.

I recollect so well that in the early days of non-co-operation I took counsel with my legal advisers as to our legal position with regard to the agitation which had been developed in different stages. The general public, in the meanwhile, criticised me and my Government because no steps were being taken to deal with non-co-operation. But I got quite clear advice that there was unsound ground for a prosecution in the early stages of that agitation, and a Government cannot afford to fail if it institutes proceedings. Of course, it is clearly impossible for a Government, when it has taken advice on a position of affairs such as I have mentioned, to disclose to the public the nature of the advice it has received. Therefore, we feel that it is wise in this matter to leave it to the full discretion of the Government of India; they know the facts, and they know what evidence is at their disposal.

Let me pass very briefly to the situation in the Punjab. With regard to that there is really nothing to add beyond what the Secretary of State has already said, but this, I think, has to be remembered in connection with the Punjab. The noble Viscount, Lord Peel, from his recollection of the situation when he left the India Office, will probably endorse what I have to say—namely, that non-co-operation, apart altogether from the Akali movement, has no hold on that Province and that it is dying out as a motive force.

It is the Akali difficulty which is the outstanding menace, and the Secretary of State traced for your Lordships the origin of that trouble. The Secretary of State has asked me to give an answer to the noble Viscount, Lord Peel, which he was not in a position to give him the other day when he addressed your Lordships.

Perhaps I may read the exact words in which he wishes to give the reply:— With reference to the question raised in the debate on July 21 by the noble Viscount, Lord Peel, as to whether one of the reasons for the failure of the Birdwood Committee was that the Sikhs made it a condition of assenting to the proposals that the Maharaja of Nabha should be restored to his State, it is true that at an early stage in the negotiations some difficulty was experienced about the public abandonment by the Shrines Committee of the Nabha agitation but that it does not appear, so far as can be gathered, that this was a deciding factor in the final stages.

No one can say with regard to this Akali difficulty that the utmost consideration has not been paid to the religious susceptibilities of the Sikhs. Throughout, we have been anxious to avoid anything which would touch the religious aspect, but order and peaceful security must be maintained; and that is the policy which the Punjab Government and the Government of India are determined to enforce in the Punjab. Sir Malcolm Hailey has only just taken office with the approval of all, and it would be hard at the present moment to expect him to launch out in any direction which would be widely different from that pursued by his predecessor until he has held the reins for a longer time. But the policy with regard to the Punjab is the same. The Punjab Government, with the approval of the Government of India, intend to maintain order and peaceful security by a consistent application of the law against all offenders, while neglecting no means of arriving at a speedy and equitable solution with regard to the matters in controversy.

I think I have covered in the main the four points around which the discussion in this debate has centred, but the noble Marquess opposite expressed in most eloquent terms the hope that the Government would be able to give some indication of their general policy in regard to

the grave situation in India at the present moment, and I think I cannot do better than read to your Lordships the first two paragraphs of the letter which Mr. MacDonald wrote to India on January 6. I might read the whole of the letter, but the first two paragraphs seem to me to embody the whole substance of the policy of this Government, though it is true that the letter was written before the Prime Minister came into office. It was published, however, after he came into office, on January 20. The Prime Minister wrote:

"I watch sometimes with no little anxiety the progress of affairs in India. During all my political life I have anchored myself firmly upon the conviction that if progress is to be well-rooted, it can only be carried on by what is called political or constitutional ways. We have seen in our own generation all sorts of revolutionary movements which seem to be successful and which have broken contacts with the past, but in the end, after much physical suffering and the creation of evil tempers and a vicious spirit, they have had to return to pick up the contacts that had been broken and to apply the very principles they had rejected.

"I can see no hope in India if it becomes the arena of a struggle between constitutionalism and revolution. No Party in Great Britain will be cowed by threats of force or by policies designed to bring government to a standstill; and if any sections in India are under the delusion that that is not so, events will very sadly disappoint them. I would urge upon all the best friends of India to come nearer to us rather than to stand apart from us, to get at our reason and our good will."

I have read that passage from the letter which was written by the Prime Minister before he became Prime Minister, but published subsequently to that date, because it embodies the policy with regard to India of His Majesty's Government, and I believe that there are no better words with which to express the policy of His Majesty's Government at the present time with regard to the state of affairs in India.

VISCOUNT PEEL: My Lords, I do not wish to detain your Lordships after this long debate for more than three or four minutes, but perhaps I may be allowed to touch very briefly upon three points that have been raised by the noble Viscount opposite. First of all, I notice that he has not replied to the very definite challenge that was given by Lord Meston as to whether the Government do or do not intend to abide by the provisions of

the Act of 1919, and whether they wish to anticipate those provisions by an earlier constitutional development. In reply to that we have only been treated to a repetition of the letter written by the present Prime Minister before he became Prime Minister, a letter by whose provisions I am not quite sure that the Government are at this time abiding.

The second point as to which I wish to say a word is this. I was rather interested to know what would be the reply of the noble Viscount opposite to the severe rebuke administered by my noble friend behind me to the Secretary of State for some observations that he made about Mr. C. R. Das. I knew that the noble Viscount opposite was a dexterous debater, and I think he showed some skill in drawing us away from that subject to the famous Minute of Lord Macaulay, which I think was perhaps a little remote from the subject with which we were dealing. But what is his defence of that statement? He told us that the Government had left, and intended so far as possible to leave, these questions of the prosecution of crime, and so on, to the Government of India. But that intention was never criticised by my noble friend behind me. It was not the action of the Government of India, or whether the Government of India ought to do this or that, but the observations that were made by the Secretary of State for India about Mr. C. R. Das which brought upon him that grave indictment.

That was really the issue that was raised. It was quite clear that the Government of India were very much disturbed by the noble Lord's statement, and that they had to issue the *communiqué* to the Press to which reference has been made—a very remarkable incident indeed in Indian government—to declare that there was no truth in the statement that Mr. Das was going to England to be consulted. In fact, I think my noble friend was standing up for the Government of India rather than criticising it. He was afraid that the many difficulties in its path would be increased, rather than diminished, by the remarkable observations of the Secretary of State for India about Mr. C. R. Das.

The third question to which I wish to make a brief reference is that of diarchy.

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I do so with some hesitation, because the noble Marquess said, I think, that he detested the whole scheme. It all depends upon what you mean by diarchy. If you take diarchy in its strictest theoretical sense, I think it is probable that it is an unworkable proposition, but I have never taken it quite in that sense. If you have your Government divided sharply into two halves, if one half of that Government is to be responsible to the Council and the other half is to be responsible to the Governor, and if those two halves work in completely water-tight compartments, such a system of Government is, of course, impossible. But it has not been worked in that manner, and, I think, quite rightly. Different Governors have, of course, worked it under rather different systems, but the wisest of them, I think, have seen to it that the two halves of the Government should consult together. In fact, they were bound to consult and to work together, for it is obvious that finance itself would be impossible if the Government were to be cut up into two separate departments. Those who have worked it best, I think, are those who have been most determined that action shall be taken only after discussion, after the Ministers have heard what the Executive Councillors had to say and the Executive Councillors have heard what the Ministers had to say, and after it has been made quite clear that in the last resort the responsibility for their actions as to the Transferred Subjects rests upon the Ministers and upon them alone, as responsible to the Councils.

I do not think that it is so much this particular system that has been at fault as the sense of responsibility to which reference has been made in the course of the debate. The great difficulty in the way of working this diarchical system, and, indeed, any Ministerial system, in the Provinces, has been that the attitude of the Councils has been almost wholly critical, not only of the actions of the Councillors but also of the actions of the Ministers. They have not preserved this nice distinction between Minister and Councillor. They have been apt to treat all those in the Government as being one, and they have not felt any sense of their own responsibility and the necessity for supporting their own Ministers. That is one of the reasons why I think that a further instalment of self-government would be so unwise at the present time.

You have not that development of Parties in the Councils which is necessary if you are to have responsible government. Ministers are too often regarded as persons who have gone over to the Government and have separated themselves from their fellow countrymen. They receive plenty of criticism but very little support. No Party seems to regard a Minister as its leader, or that his success or failure affects its own fortunes.

I am bound to say that the noble Viscount seemed to me to defend the reforms in a somewhat paradoxical manner, because he pointed out that all these methods that have been adopted to carry on the work of government in the Provinces, owing to the refusal of the Councillors to vote supplies, were adopted under the Act. That is, of course, perfectly true. These safeguards are embodied in the Act, but I think it is rather paradoxical to say that the fact that it has been absolutely essential to have recourse to these particular safeguards because the actions of the Councillors have been so irresponsible is in itself a sign of the proper working of the Constitution. I think that is an argument which would be very ill received by the Swarajists, who themselves are always complaining that these particular reserve powers, which according to the noble Viscount are the reason for the working of the Constitution, are the only blots on the Constitution, and that if they were removed it would be quite possible to carry on constitutional government in the Councils.

The last point upon which I would like to say one word is this, that although I am obliged for many of the sympathetic references to the Services made by the Secretary of State, and also by the noble Viscount, yet I do not feel even now that they fully realise or—shall I say?—are sensitive to the extremely unfortunate position in which these Services are now placed. The Secretary of State generally, I understand, has accepted the reforms as suggested in the Report as a whole, but he tells us that it will be some six months at least before Orders can be passed carrying them out. What I want to urge upon him is that if he accepts the Report as a whole it is not necessary or essential that all parts of the Report

shall be carried out at one and the same time. Some matters are bound to take time and require consultation—for instance, the setting up of the Commission and the reforms in the Medical Service, which must be the subject of great consideration, and matters like the legislation required in the Provinces to deal with the new methods of recruiting for the Services in the Provinces with reference to Transferred Subjects.

Those matters must take time, but there are many matters which need not take time at all. For example, there is the question of passages, and other things for the relief of the Services. Those things can be dealt with at once by the Secretary of State, and I strongly urge upon him not to be deterred by the necessity of carrying out the whole Report at the same time, but to deal with some of these subjects at once without the delay which would otherwise occur. I think it would have an admirable effect upon the Services if he were to take that course, because, after all, these reforms and changes have been so long delayed, and the Services have lost so much heart, that I believe it would be an earnest to them that the changes were to be carried out as a whole. I believe that would be the best thing the Secretary of State could do to restore heart to the Services, whose position, as my noble friend has stated, has in some of the Provinces almost reached the breaking point. I cannot honestly say that I am fully satisfied with the reply of the Secretary of State on many points, but nevertheless I do not think that at this hour it would be in your Lordships' interest that I should press for Papers. Indeed, I think the Papers are before us, and therefore I do not press my Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 1st August, 1924.

ROYAL COMMISSION.

The following Bill received the Royal Assent:—

Government of India (Leave of Absence).

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 9th October, 1924.

HIS MAJESTY'S SPEECH.

And afterwards His Majesty's most gracious Speech was delivered to both Houses of Parliament by the Lord Chancellor (in pursuance of His Majesty's Command) as followeth—

" My Lords and Members of the House of Commons,

" My relations with Foreign Powers continue to be of a friendly nature.

" The acceptance of the Dawes Report by the Powers concerned was confirmed by the Conference held in London in July and August, when practical measures required in order to allow of the recommendations being put into force were unanimously approved. This happy result is due to the broadminded spirit of co-operation with which the very difficult problems involved were approached by the Powers concerned. I believe that this settlement will contribute largely to the restoration of international commerce, on which the material prosperity of this country so largely depends.

" Following the close understanding reached between the British and French Delegations at Geneva, the fifth Assembly of the League of Nations by formulating proposals for dealing with the problem of general arbitration and security has made an important advance on the road to the reduction of armaments. The issue of its discussions has been embodied in a protocol which will be laid before Parliament as soon as possible, and which it is hoped will lead to the first practical measures for lightening the heavy burdens under which the nations are suffering.

" My Government have renewed diplomatic relations with the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and have concluded with the Government of the Union the two Treaties which have been laid before you. These Treaties have for their object the re-establishment of political and commercial ties between Great Britain and Russia as a necessary element in the general pacification and economic reconstruction of Europe.

" Under the terms of the Treaty the question of the frontier between Turkey and Iraq has been referred to the Council of the League of Nations, who have decided to appoint a special Commission to report to them on the matter. Pending a final settlement both parties have undertaken to maintain the *status quo* on the frontier.

" I regret that, as explained in a Paper recently laid before you, the informal discussions with the Prime Minister of Egypt did not lead to negotiations which might have resulted in the conclusion of a satisfactory agreement. In the absence of such agreement the position of My Country in relation to Egypt will continue to be governed by the policy adopted when the Protectorate was withdrawn.

" Steps have been taken by My Ministers in conjunction with the Governments of My Dominions for the formation of a Committee to devise means for the more efficient marketing in this country of various articles of food

" Members of the House of Commons,

" I thank you for the provision you have made for the public service.

" My Lords and Members of the House of Commons,

" Though there are, I am glad to say, signs of distinct improvement in some of the principal industries and in certain branches of trade and commerce, severe depression continues. My Ministers have been actively engaged in the development of a constructive policy with a view to stimulating industry and encouraging trade as the only means of dealing fundamentally with the unemployment from which a large proportion of Our fellow-citizens are still suffering. Meanwhile, the measures taken by My Ministers for the provision of increased and continuous unemployment benefit have not only lightened the burden upon the ratepayers in the most necessitous areas, but have also alleviated the sufferings of the innocent victims of industrial depression.

" The measures taken by My Ministers, with the support of Parliament, to enable local authorities and

the building industry to engage in a fifteen years' uninterrupted building programme will, I hope, afford an effective remedy for the serious overcrowding which continues to be a source of grievous harm to the character and physique of many hundreds of thousands of My people.

"Steps have also been taken by My Government to assist agriculture by loans to Farmers' Co-operative Societies and by increasing grants-in-aid of agricultural education and research. An Act has also been passed to regulate the wages of agricultural labourers in England and Wales.

"The taking of a new Census of Production, together with various other inquiries which have been set on foot, will, I hope, afford valuable indications

of the directions in which the industrial and commercial organisation of the country can be improved.

"The advance of educational development has been freed from the restrictions recently imposed upon it and the lines for further progress have been laid down towards a more universal system of secondary education.

"In bidding you farewell, I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your labours."

End of the Session of the Thirty-third Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in the fifteenth year of the Reign of His Majesty King George V.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

SESSION 1924

(14 & 15 GEORGE V.)

[From 17th January to 9th October, 1924.]

COMPRISING EXTRACTS FROM

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

OF QUESTIONS, PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES RELATING
TO INDIAN AFFAIRS.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE INDIA OFFICE
BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1924

HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

[FORMED BY RT. HON. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, JANUARY, 1924.]

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—Rt. Hon. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, M.P.
Lord Privy Seal and Deputy Leader of the House of Commons—Rt. Hon. J. R. CLYNES, M.P.
Lord President of the Council—Rt. Hon. Lord PARMOOR, K.C.V.O.
Lord Chancellor—Rt. Hon. Lord HALDANE, K.T., O.M.
Chancellor of the Exchequer—Rt. Hon. PHILIP SNOWDEN, M.P.
Secretary of State for Home Affairs—Rt. Hon. ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.
Secretary of State for the Colonies—Rt. Hon. J. H. THOMAS, M.P.
Secretary of State for War—Rt. Hon. STEPHEN WALSH, M.P.
Secretary of State for India—Rt. Hon. Lord OLIVIER, K.C.M.G., C.B.
Secretary of State for Air—Rt. Hon. Lord THOMSON.
First Lord of the Admiralty—Rt. Hon. Viscount CHELMSFORD, G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., G.B.E.
President of the Board of Trade—Rt. Hon. SIDNEY WEBB, M.P.
Minister of Health—Rt. Hon. JOHN WHEATLEY, M.P.
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries—Rt. Hon. NOEL BUXTON, M.P.
Secretary for Scotland—Rt. Hon. WILLIAM ADAMSON, M.P.
President of the Board of Education—Rt. Hon. CHARLES PHILIPS TREVELYAN, M.P.
Minister of Labour—Rt. Hon. THOMAS SHAW, M.P.
Postmaster General—Rt. Hon. VERNON HARTSHORN, M.P.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—Colonel Rt. Hon. JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD, M.P.
First Commissioner of Works—Rt. Hon. F. W. JOWETT, M.P.

India Office—

Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Lord OLIVIER, K.C.M.G., C.B.
Under-Secretary of State—ROBERT RICHARDS, Esq., M.P.

INDIAN DEBATES.

SESSION 1924.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 17th January, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER.

Mr. LINFIELD asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the murders and abductions on the North-West Frontier of India, any steps have been taken to prevent women residing there?

Earl WINTERTON: No general prohibition has been imposed. Under standing arrangements British officers are precluded from taking their wives and families into certain areas, such as the Khyber and Waziristan. In view of the recent outrages the position in other areas has been carefully examined. Women and children have been restricted as far as possible to cantonment limits, and other special precautions have been introduced where they were considered necessary. The civil and military authorities are satisfied that the continued residence of women in these areas subject to these limitations is not a matter for apprehension.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the present political and military situation on the Afghanistan frontier of India; whether any ultimatum or Diplomatic Note has been sent or handed to the Government at Kabul; and what is the purport of such ultimatum or Diplomatic Note?

Mr. RONALD McNEILL: The political situation is, in brief, that the surrender to the Afghan Government a few days ago of one of the murder-gangs has cleared the way for a settlement of one important question, and that it is hoped that a

satisfactory settlement of other outstanding questions may be attained before long. The military situation on the British side of the frontier has not been affected in any way by Anglo-Afghan relations; on the Afghan side a small body of Afghan troops has been engaged in operations against the murderers. His Majesty's Minister communicated to the Afghan Government some months ago a Note stating that His Majesty's Government had decided, in accordance with the terms of the Anglo-Afghan treaty, to withhold permission for the transit of certain arms through India until the Afghan Government had taken steps to dispel the belief that it was pursuing an unfriendly and provocative policy towards Great Britain, and further representations have been made with a view in particular to expediting action against the murderers; but the report recently published as to the delivery of an ultimatum was entirely false.

COTTON IMPORTS.

Mr. HANNON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether statistics are available of the imports of yarn and cotton cloth into India from the United Kingdom, Japan, and the United States of America during the past year?

Earl WINTERTON: The figures so far as available are as follow:

IMPORTS INTO INDIA.

10 months, January-October, 1923 *

Cotton Twist and Yarn.

From	Quantity.	Value.
	Lbs.	Rs.
United Kingdom ..	16,574,421	3,57,46,845
Japan	22,227,730	2,80,30,048
United States of America.†	—	—

* Figures for November and December not yet available.

† Figures not available.

Cotton Piece Goods.

—	Quantity.	Value.
	Yards.	Rs.
United Kingdom..	1,131,560,307	41,37,66,558
Japan	96,064,403	3,53,05,354
United States of America.†	327,959	120,432

† Excluding quantity and value of coloured piece goods from April to October, inclusive, figures not being available.

CIVIL SERVANTS (POST OFFICE).

Mr. AMMON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the application in the India postal service of the next-below rule, whereby an admitted injustice to the senior members of the staff was removed, has been applied in such manner that, through no fault of their own, senior men have for 15 months drawn less pay than their juniors; and whether inquiries can be made with a view to reimburse the men affected for the money lost?

Earl WINTERTON: My Noble Friend the Secretary of State has no information on the subject, but if the hon. Member will furnish particulars of the cases to which he refers, inquiry will be made.

Monday, 21st January, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MURDER OF MR. DAY, CALCUTTA.

1. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has received any information regarding the murder of Mr. Day in the Chowringhee at Calcutta; and whether the murder was the act of a fanatic or due to political reasons?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Earl Winterton): Information has been received to the same effect as the messages that have already appeared in the public Press. It seems clear that the murder was due to political reasons. The man arrested is a member of a revolutionary society. But there is every reason

to suppose that Mr. Day was shot by the murderer in mistake for someone else.

MURDER OF BRITISH SUBJECTS, AFGHAN FRONTIER.

2. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has received any definite information as to the reported capture of the band that murdered Majors Orr and Anderson and Major Finnis; and whether he will urge on the Afghan Government the necessity of co-operating in the future with a view to the prevention of these dastardly murders by either guaranteeing the punishment of the murderers or their expulsion from Afghan territory?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. Ronald McNeill): Two out of the six tribesmen supposed to have been implicated in the murder of Major Finnis have been captured, on the British side of the frontier. I regret that up to the present we have not heard that the other four, or the two Afghan subjects concerned in the murder of Majors Orr and Anderson, have been captured. The whole question remains under discussion with the Afghan Government. I need not say that so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, every effort has been and will continue to be made to bring the murderers to justice, and to provide against the occurrence of similar outrages in future.

Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY: Would it not be possible to arrange for some form of Extradition Treaty with the Afghan Government, by which the murderers of British subjects in British territory that fly for refuge to Arghanistan could be extradited? And is it not the case that the only punishment which the Afghan Government chooses to give them at present is to deport them to Persia or Turkestan, which is really no punishment at all?

Mr. McNEILL: I think all those considerations are being taken into account between the two Governments.

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION.

3 and 4. **Mr. J. HOPE SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India (1) whether, in view of the urgent im-

portance of the matter to the Indian services, he has instructed the Government of India to exercise despatch in dealing with the Report of the Royal Commission on the Indian Public Services; and whether arrangements have been made for similar expedition in the India Office;

(2) whether the Royal Commission on the Indian Public Services has been instructed to submit its Report in sections; and, if so, when the first section will be received in England?

Earl WINTERTON: It will be for the Royal Commission to determine in what form and when it will make its recommendations. At the same time, I can assure the hon. Member that the need for expedition in dealing with the Report of the Royal Commission has been recognised to the full in all communications which have passed between the Government of India and the India Office, both before and after the Commission was appointed, and that as far as my Noble Friend has been able to insure, any action conducive to that end will be taken both here and in India.

Mr. SIMPSON: Can the Noble Lord say when the inquiry is likely to be completed?

Earl WINTERTON: No, Sir; it is impossible to give even an approximate date.

Tuesday, 12th February, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MR. GANDHI (RELEASE).

Mr. WARDLAW MILNE (*by Private Notice*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the release of Mr. Gandhi has been permitted unconditionally, or whether he has given any undertaking to refrain in the future from actions of the character of those which resulted in his conviction and whether his release was carried out at the instance of the Government of Bombay or was suggested to the Government of India by the Secretary of State?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. R. Richards): No conditions were attached to the release of Mr. Gandhi, who had recently undergone an operation for appendicitis. The Secretary of State left full discretion to the Government of India in the matter, and their decision was taken after consultation with the Government of Bombay.

NON-CO-OPERATION PARTY.

Mr. MILNE (*by Private Notice*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the assassin who murdered Mr. Day in Calcutta on the 19th January, 1924, was a member of the Non-co-operation party; is this party still preaching racial hatred in Bengal towns and villages and through the newspapers, and, if so, what action is being taken by the Government of India to counteract or prevent these activities?

Mr. WALLHEAD: Can the hon. Member also say whether the late lamented Crippen was a member of the Tory party?

Mr. RICHARDS: The assassin belonged to a secret revolutionary society, but there is no reason to suppose that the Non-co-operation party, in spite of its racial views, has inspired crimes of violence as a system of policy. With regard to the second and third parts of the question, whenever the Government have reason to suppose that owing to political agitation the peace is likely to be broken, action has been taken under the provisions of law appropriate to the circumstances.

Wednesday, 13th February, 1924.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS.—**Mr. SPEAKER** laid upon the Table a Report from the Counsel to Mr. Speaker, That, in accordance with Standing Order 79, he had conferred with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and they had determined that the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway Bill should originate in the House of Lords.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords].—**Mr. SPEAKER** laid upon the Table Report from the

[Mr. Richards.]

Majesty's Government. The third part of the question does not, therefore, arise.

Mr. REMER: What is the "small proportion" to which the hon. Gentleman refers?

Mr. RICHARDS: I believe that during last year about 97 per cent. of the orders were placed with British contractors.

Mr. REMER: In view of the unsatisfactory answer that has been given, I beg to give notice that I will refer to the matter on the Adjournment to-morrow night.

POLICE ADMINISTRATION.

4. Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the Annual Police Administration Reports of the various Indian provinces lately published, in which the reductions forced upon the police department and the want of proper detective training schools are shown to have resulted in a great increase of crime; and if he can state what steps are being taken to restore the Indian police forces to their former strength and to give them adequate pay?

Mr. RICHARDS: The latest reports received show that the hon. and gallant Member is generalising too widely from one or two facts. There was a general decrease in crime (in spite of a rise of crimes of violence in certain provinces), while the expenditure on police increased in most provinces, and the strength of the force had been on the whole maintained or increased. There have been subsequent reductions in Bengal, for instance, as the result of a retrenchment inquiry, and in the Punjab by the disbanding of additional police employed in 1922 for temporary purposes. And, though it is the case that financial stringency has retarded the introduction of some reforms, considerable increases of pay and allowances have been granted to the police generally in recent years, and it is clear that the Governments concerned are devoting to this branch of administration full attention, and as large funds as their resources permit.

Sir C. YATE: Does the hon. Gentleman consider that the police in India are adequately paid?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like to have notice of that question.

SEDITIONOUS AGITATION (PENSIONERS).

5. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the recent announcement by the Government of India on the subject of the forfeiture of pensions by military pensioners engaged in seditious agitation applies equally to civil pensioners; and, if not, what are the penalties imposed upon the latter.

Mr. RICHARDS: The particular announcement does not apply to ordinary civil pensioners. The rule as to them is contained in article 351 of the Civil Service Regulations, of which I will furnish the hon. and gallant Member with a copy.

MARRIED BRITISH OFFICERS AND MEN (PAY).

6. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, whether he is aware that it has been computed that married British service officers, as well as married quarter-masters, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, with children, are worse off in India than at home to approximately the following extent, viz., a married captain £22 per annum, a married lieutenant of over seven years' service £63 per annum, and under seven years' service £68 per annum; that married quarter-masters, whose pay depends on length of service as such, lose by service in India in every grade, and married warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men lose, respectively, about £49 14s., £20 12s. 6d., and £16 2s. 6d. per annum; and whether he will state what steps it is proposed to take to remedy the discontent brought about by this reduction of pay during service abroad in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The pay of the British Army, as the hon. and gallant Member is aware, comes up for revision in July of this year, and full consideration will then be given to the position of married personnel of all ranks of the British Service in India. If the hon. and gallant Member will give me details of the data on which he founds the figures in his question, I shall be glad to look into them, and communicate the result to him.

MOPLAH REBELLION (PRISONERS).

7. Mr. HOPE SIMPSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how

many Moplah prisoners have been transported to the Andaman Islands, and are now detained there; whether they are treated as ordinary criminals; and whether any Moplah women and children are resident in the penal settlement?

Mr. RICHARDS: In July last there were in all 1,235 Moplahs in the Andamans—all in Port Blair. Seventy-two were in the cellular jail, 12 in the adolescent gang, 40 agriculturists and self-supporters, and the rest in convict barracks. There were no special arrangements for segregating Moplahs from association with other convicts. They were treated like others, except that the initial period of cellular confinement was frequently shortened. The Government are willing to settle any who desire to stay, with or without their families; with this object agricultural and other tickets are issued freely, and the families of all who ask for them are sent to the islands at Government expense. Up to July, one family—a wife and four children—had been settled, and the settlement of three more was expected shortly.

Mr. SIMPSON: What has happened since July last?

Mr. RICHARDS: I must ask for notice of that question.

Mr. SIMPSON: Will the hon. Gentleman get particulars and bring the information up to date?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will, certainly.

PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION.

8. **Mr. SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India when the First Report of the Public Services Commission on India is likely to be published?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not in a position at present to add anything to the answer given by my predecessor to the hon. Member's question on this subject on 21st January. The Commission is still taking evidence.

Mr. SIMPSON: Is the Commission inquiring into the covenanted service as well as the uncovenanted service?

Mr. RICHARDS: I must ask for notice of that question.

Earl WINTERTON: Will the hon. Gentleman represent to the Leader of the

House the desirability of having a Debate in the House on the Report of the Commission as soon as it is published?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will do so.

ARMY (INDIAN OFFICERS).

10. **Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give any information with regard to the Indianisation of the Indian Army; and whether the experiment has proved a success?

Mr. RICHARDS: Indianisation of the Indian Army was started in two Indian cavalry regiments and six Indian infantry battalions last year, and one Indian officer with King's Commission will be posted to each of these units each year in place of a British officer. It is obvious that it is too early as yet to gauge the prospects of success.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Has it already started?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

BOMBAY CORPORATION (TENDERS).

12. **Sir WILLIAM MITCHELL THOMSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the municipal corporation of Bombay are issuing tender forms in which intending contractors are asked to note that the corporation have expressed the opinion that no articles manufactured in any part of the British Empire outside India should be used by any of the departments of the municipality or by any contractor, except when they are not available in any other part of the world; and whether he has received any information on the subject from the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have heard from the Government of India that the resolution was passed, but have not yet heard of any action taken on it.

Mr. A. M. SAMUEL: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that investors in England will not be content to send money to India if it is spent in buying foreign goods while their own people are out of work?

Sir W. MITCHELL-THOMSON: Do we understand that the hon. Gentleman is asking for further information?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is so.

KENYA COLONY (FRANCHISE).

13. Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the committee to be appointed by the Government of India to inquire into the proposed immigration law for Kenya Colony will also have power to inquire into the operation of the franchise law in Kenya, and to suggest, if deemed advisable, any modification thereof?

Mr. RICHARDS: The committee to which my hon. Friend refers is the committee which is being appointed by the Government of India in accordance with the decision of the Imperial Conference. Its purpose, so far as Kenya is concerned, is not limited to the proposed immigration law. It will be open to it to make representations, not only on that subject, but also on the operation of the franchise law, and to suggest, if it so deem advisable, modifications thereof.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

MR. GANDHI.

Mr. GWYNNE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the decision to release Mr. Gandhi was based solely on account of ill-health; and whether the proposal originated from the Government of India or the Government of Bombay?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes, Sir. As regards the last part of the question, I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given on the 12th instant to the hon. Member for Kidderminster (Mr. Milne).

GURKHA REGIMENTS (DECEASED OFFICERS' HOUSES).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the widows of officers of Gurkha regiments killed in the War are unable to dispose of the houses owned by their late husbands in the various hill cantonments occupied by Gurkha regiments owing to the peculiar circumstances connected with officers' quarters in those cantonments; and whether the Government of India can now remedy these grievances by purchasing these houses, as they have said they would be willing to do when opportunity arose?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India are being asked for a report on this matter, and I will communicate with the hon. and gallant Member on receipt of their reply.

KENYA.

Mr. SNELL asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, although the Kenya White Paper, issued in August last, declared that racial discrimination could not be countenanced, many of the people of India believe that the Kenya Immigration Bill, prepared by the Kenya Government, does in fact discriminate against Asiatics; whether he is aware that the Viceroy and the Government of India have protested against certain of its clauses, and that in its present form the Bill causes uneasiness among His Majesty's Indian subjects; whether he is aware that at the recent sessions of the East African Indian National Congress, held at Mombassa, delegates representing Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, and Zanzibar, it was unanimously decided to refuse to pay the poll tax and to resist this Bill in every possible way; and whether he will use his influence to secure its withdrawal?

Mr. MOREL asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what were the reasons for the rejection of the draft Immigration Bill recently submitted to His Majesty's Government by the Governor of Kenya Colony, and whether a fresh draft Bill has been called for; whether it is his intention to submit the new draft Bill, when received, for examination by the Committee to be set up by the Government of India in terms of the decision reached by the last Imperial Conference; whether, in transmitting the provisions of the Wood-Winterton agreement to the Governor of Kenya, his predecessor, in September, 1922, expressed the opinion that no further restrictions upon immigration into Kenya were necessary; whether he has received through the Secretary of State for India, or otherwise, official statistics from the Government of India showing that, upon a balance of influx into and efflux from the colony, during the last five years, the Indian population has been stationary; upon what evidence he has decided that a new law for the further control of immigration into the colony is necessary; whether the evi-

dence, if any, has been communicated by him to any of the communities affected or likely to be affected by such further legislation or to the Government of India; and whether its observations thereon have been sought?

Mr. THOMAS: The draft Kenya Immigration Ordinance was referred back to the Governor by my predecessor mainly on questions relating to the form of the Ordinance, and the Governor was requested at the same time to furnish statistics as to the immigration and emigration of Indians in the year 1923. Pending the receipt of the Governor's reply, I desire to say nothing which will hamper my freedom when the time comes for me to consider the new draft Ordinance, and I hope that my hon. Friends will excuse me from replying fully to their questions. I may, however, say that when the new draft is received full opportunity will be given to the Government of India to express their views on the draft, and that, when the Committee which the Government of India propose to appoint reaches London, I shall give careful attention to any representations which they may make on this Measure, whether it is by that time still a draft or an enacted Ordinance.

NATAL, TOWNSHIP FRANCHISE (ASIATICS).

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the Ordinance of the Natal Provincial Council amending the Natal Township Act of 1881 by the total elimination of Asiatics from township franchise, to which Ordinance the Governor-General-in-Council has reserved his assent; whether he has received any communication from the Government of the Union of South Africa on the subject; and, if so, what action does he propose to take in the matter?

Mr. THOMAS: I have seen a statement in the Press on the subject, but no communication has been received from the Governor-General. Under the South Africa Act, 1909, it rests with the Government of the Union of South Africa to decide whether assent should be given to Ordinances passed by a Provincial

Council, and no question therefore of action by His Majesty's Government arises.

Tuesday, 19th February, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

RAILWAY MATERIAL (ORDERS).

14. Mr. LAMBERT asked the President of the Board of Trade if he has ascertained the reasons why recent British tenders for the supply of five locomotives to the Indian State railways, and thereby to the Egyptian State railways, were higher in price than those of German and Italian firms?

Mr. WEBB: I have no information on this matter beyond that which has appeared in the public Press.

Mr. LAMBERT: Will the right hon. Gentleman institute inquiries as to why British manufacturers are unable to compete with German goods?

Mr. WEBB: I am afraid that that would be a rather wide inquiry, but I will consult the Secretary of State for India on the subject as he deals with the Indian State railways. At present I have no knowledge of what the tenders were or by what amount the British prices exceeded those of any other country.

Mr. LAMBERT: May I press my right hon. Friend that the point is that British manufacturers are unable to compete in India and Egypt with foreign manufacturers, and that, if so, this is a distinct question for the Board of Trade?

Mr. WEBB: I do not at present see any reason for supposing that British manufacturers on the whole are unable to compete with foreign manufacturers.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

Mr. G. WILSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that a Committee consisting of

officials and non-officials, after investigating the present conditions in Burma, has come to the conclusion that the drink habit is a considerable factor in causing the recent increase of crime in the province; and whether the Government have taken, or propose to take, any steps to ascertain the grounds for such a conclusion being arrived at?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes, Sir. The grounds on which the Crime Inquiry Committee in Burma based their opinion as to the connection between drink and crime in the Province are clearly stated in their Report. No further inquiry therefore seems to be called for.

Mr. WILSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can state which of the Native States have already decided upon prohibition of the drink traffic?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no official information that any Indian State has decided upon prohibition; but it was reported in the Indian newspapers last year that one State—Bhopal—had adopted this policy.

EAST AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS.

Sir C. YATE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of the Indian Congress held at Mombassa, with the assistance of several delegates from India, in which the Congress passed a resolution demanding the recall of the Governor and refused to adopt a resolution of loyalty to the King, while the chairman warned the Indians that they must be prepared to grapple fearlessly with the Government and to shed their last drop of blood in the cause; and why these delegates from India were ever permitted to land to stir up disaffection in the Kenya Colony?

Mr. THOMAS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. I know of no power under which the landing of the delegates from India to the East African Indian Congress could have been prohibited. Nor do I think that it would in any case have been desirable to prevent their landing.

TRADE FACILITIES [MONEY].

Considered in Committee under Standing Order No. 71A.

[**Mr. ROBERT YOUNG** in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it is expedient:

(a) to amend the Trade Facilities Acts, 1921 and 1922,

(i) by increasing from fifty million pounds to sixty-five million pounds the limit on the aggregate capital amount of the loans the principal or interest of which may be guaranteed thereunder; and

(ii) by extending to the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred and twenty-five, the period within which guarantees may be given under the Trade Facilities Act, 1921;

(b) to authorise the Treasury, with a view to the promotion of employment in the United Kingdom, to pay, in respect of a period not exceeding five years, an amount not exceeding three-quarters of any interest payable in respect of such portion as is to be expended in the United Kingdom of any loan the proceeds whereof are to be applied on or in connection with a public utility undertaking in some part of His Majesty's Dominions or in a British Protectorate, so, however, that the amount so payable by the Treasury shall not exceed one million pounds in any one year or five million pounds in all;

(c) to amend the Overseas Trade Acts, 1920 to 1922, by extending to the eighth day of September, nineteen hundred and twenty-six, the period within which new guarantees under those Acts may be given, and by extending to the eighth day of September, nineteen hundred and thirty, the period during which guarantees under those Acts may remain in force;

(d) to amend Section three of the Trade Facilities and Loans Guarantee Act, 1922 (Session 2), by increasing to seven million pounds the aggregate capital amount of the loan to be raised by the Government of the Soudan, the principal and interest of which may be guaranteed under the said Section."—[*King's Recommendation signified.*]

Sir PHILIP LLOYD-GREAME: When we were discussing this at the Imperial Economic Conference, the representative of India explained what the Indian railway programme was likely to be, that the Indian Government accepted the general principle, I think, of

the Acworth Report, and that they contemplated the extraordinary expenditure of £100,000,000 in five years on railway development suggested to the Indian Government that they should expedite this programme and put into the first two or three years what would normally have been the orders placed in this country in those years and in the fourth and fifth years. If the Indian Government would be prepared to consider that, there would be an enormous advantage to this country, and I think also a great advantage to Indian railway development which is terribly behind.

I would suggest that an effort should be made by the Government of this country to press upon the Government of India that they should put in hand within two or three years the whole of that railway development programme of £100,000,000. I hope that may be the more possible, because I see that the Indian Government have made the reform of separating their Railway Budget from the ordinary Indian Budget, and I hope that will mean that it will be more possible to consider this scheme simply on its merits. I should like him to consider rather carefully before the Report stage whether it would not be wise to put a somewhat larger figure there.

Mr. GRAHAM: As regards the other question he asked regarding the Indian railways and grants in Kenya and Uganda, I think at the moment they are really beyond the scope of this Resolution, and as proposals applying to those areas will be presented to the House, I could not undertake at this stage to say they will be covered by a scheme of this kind. They involve political and other difficulties which at this stage I dare not take time to explain.

Thursday, 21st February, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BRITISH ARMY.

CLAIM FOR FALSE IMPRISONMENT (LIEUTENANT CLENDINING).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the fact that the Officers' Association have sent in a claim to the

Army Council for compensation on behalf of Lieutenant C. H. Clendining, 3rd Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, on the grounds of the false imprisonment, conspiracy and persecution to which this officer was subjected whilst serving in India during 1917; if he is aware that there is a mass of evidence available to prove that this officer never suffered from any mental instability; and will he order an investigation into all the facts and, if these are found on inquiry to be true, see that Lieutenant Clendining receives the compensation due to him?

Major ATTLEE: I am aware that a claim has been made. The case is at present under consideration by the Government of India, and pending their report, I am not in a position to make any statement.

Monday, 25th February, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BOMBAY MUNICIPALITY (BRITISH GOODS).

1. **Sir W. MITCHELL - THOMSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has yet received information from the Government of India regarding the resolution of the Bombay municipality which seeks to discriminate against British goods?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. R. Richards): I have to-day heard from India that a report is being sent by this week's mail. Perhaps the hon. Member will put his question down again when the report has arrived. I will let him know when it is received.

NORTHERN FRONTIER (MILITARY ROADS).

3. **Mr. WARDLAW MILNE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what progress has been made by the Government of India recently in the construction of military roads on the Northern Frontier; and what amount of money has been set aside by the Government of India for the construction of such roads?

Mr. RICHARDS: Progress of military roads is as follows:

- (1) The circular motor road from the Tochi Valley at Isha to Razmak and thence to Jandola connecting with Dera Ismail Khan has been recently completed.
- (2) The road from Thall in the Kuram Valley to Idak in the Tochi Valley is to be made fit for light motor traffic.

In addition the political authorities are undertaking the following roads:

- (3) A motor road is now being made from Jandola to Sarwekai towards Wano.
- (4) A motor road from Draband to Ghazni Khel just inside the administrative border of Waziristan is now under construction.

During the year 1923-24 Rs.69,00,000 were placed at the disposal of the military authorities for development of the roads in this part of the country. It is not yet possible to say what sums will be placed at their disposal in the new financial year.

MINES (EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN).

4. **Mr. T. SMITH** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the nature of the replies received by the Government of India in response to the circular letter sent out to all local government administrations in June, 1923, on the question of the employment of women in mines and the introduction of a system of shifts?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Secretary of State would not in the ordinary course receive copies of the replies until they are complete. He has at present no information as to the nature of the replies nor whether any have yet been received, but I will let my hon. Friend know when information is available.

CANTONMENT MAGISTRATES (PENSIONS).

5. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering that the Indian Cantonments Bill has been passed into law, he can state whether, under the changed conditions of service, Indian Army officers in civil employment as cantonment magistrates will now be permitted to retire on proportionate pensions

the same as other officers in similar positions?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer is in the negative. The changes in the conditions of service of members of the present Cantonment Magistrates Department which are provided for in the Cantonments Bill are not similar to the changes in the conditions of service of those officers who are eligible for retirement on proportionate pensions.

Sir C. YATE: Will the hon. Gentleman reconsider this matter? The last Government said it would receive consideration, and I think the hon. Gentleman will find that the circumstances are very similar.

Mr. RICHARDS: The hon. and gallant Member is under some misapprehension. I think the position in the two cases is entirely different.

Sir C. YATE: Not at all.

DIVORCE LAW.

6. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the decision of a full bench of the High Court in Lahore, delivered last month, to the effect that, though Indian Judges had jurisdiction to try divorce cases between British subjects domiciled in Great Britain, they thought that probably the English Court would not recognise their decree; and what steps have been taken, or are to be taken, to amend the law of divorce in India as regards British subjects with a British domicile owing to a decree of divorce granted by a High Court in India having been declared invalid in 1921 by the President of the Probate, Admiralty, and Divorce Division in England on the ground that the Indian Court possessed no jurisdiction?

Mr. RICHARDS: As the hon. and gallant Member is no doubt aware, steps were taken in 1921 by legislation in this Parliament to validate past and pending Indian decrees affected by the President's judgment referred to, and so long ago as July, 1921, my Noble Friend's predecessor initiated consultation with the Government of India as to the possibility of amending the law, and, if so, in what direction. The inquiry is still proceeding, but, while recognising fully its importance, I cannot hold out hopes of an early solution, in view of the com-

plexity and the controversial nature of the questions involved. The Lahore High Court's judgment creates no new situation.

Sir C. YATE: Has the hon. Gentleman not seen the cases that are now up before the Courts in India, and the great complications that may arise if some decision is not speedily arrived at?

Mr. RICHARDS: I appreciate that, but the difficulty is not merely the assimilation of the decrees given in India with the laws of this country, but the assimilation throughout the Empire. That raises very big and difficult questions.

PRISON ACCOMMODATION (EUROPEANS).

9. **Mr. GILBERT** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any special prisons are maintained in India for European civilian or military prisoners; if so, how many and where they are situated; and whether Europeans under punishment are detained in the same prisons as natives of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: No special prisons are maintained in India for the relatively small number of European prisoners sentenced under the ordinary criminal law, but it is the practice in the various provinces to arrange for their confinement in the more central gaols, or special sections of gaols, where they can receive separate and suitable accommodation. British officers and soldiers sentenced to imprisonment by courts-martial for purely military offences are, if they remain in India, kept in military prisons or detention barracks. There is a combined military prison and detention barrack at Poona, and detention barracks at Aden, Lucknow, Quetta, Trimulgherry and Sialkote. It is customary to transfer military prisoners sentenced to a term of imprisonment or detention exceeding 12 months to a prison or detention barracks in the United Kingdom as soon as practicable.

PENSIONED OFFICERS.

10. **Mr. GWYNNE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of pensioned officers of the Indian services, other than members of the Indian Civil Service, who retired previous to 23rd July, 1913?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is not altogether clear to what the question refers, but I

presume the hon. Member is referring to pensioners belonging to what are usually known as the uncovenanted services who retired before 23rd July, 1913, on a pension of Rs.5,000 a year or over and who are still alive. Those drawing pensions in this country number 376. I have no information as to the number drawing pension in India.

Sir C. YATE: Will the case of these 300 odd officers, members of the uncovenanted services, be taken into consideration?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand that it has.

Sir C. YATE: Will the hon. Gentleman try again, and reconsider that point?

RAILWAY MATERIAL (ORDERS).

12. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the tender forms issued by the Indian Store Department contain references to the King's Roll, and that British tenderers are asked for an assurance that their names are on that roll; and will he draw the attention of the High Commissioner of India to the incompatibility of those instructions with the placing of orders for locomotives with Germany?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part of the question, I do not agree that any incompatibility such as is suggested exists. When tenders are approximately equal in price, the practice of the High Commissioner is to give a preference to a firm on the King's Roll over one that is not. But in the case to which the hon. and gallant Member refers the tender of the German firm was 25 per cent. below that of the lowest British tender, and the High Commissioner was, as I explained last week, bound to follow his instructions to purchase in the best market.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Will the hon. Gentleman draw the attention of the High Commissioner to the great unemployment that exists at present in the iron and steel industries in this country?

Mr. RICHARDS: The attention of the High Commissioner has been drawn to that fact.

Mr. D. G. SOMERVILLE: May we take it that all firms who are invited to tender are on the King's Roll?

Mr. RICHARDS: I do not think that that follows at all.

CONSTITUTION (REFORM).

2. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he will consider the desirability of appointing a Commission to examine the working of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms with a view to seeing what greater powers and what extensions of the franchise are immediately possible?

11. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the attention of the Secretary of State for India has been called to the fact that a Resolution has been passed in the Legislative Assembly at Delhi asking that a round-table conference should take place between representatives of the British Government and Indian Nationalists for the purpose of discussing what further measures of reform could be undertaken in order to establish peace in India; and whether His Majesty's Government and the Government of India will give favourable consideration to this proposal?

Mr. RICHARDS: This question is receiving the most serious consideration, and if the hon. Members will repeat their questions at a later date, I hope to be in a position to give them an answer.

Sir HENRY CRAIK: Are we to understand that the Government have reversed the policy of the Act of 1919 and propose to speed up the time when a revision of the constitution should take place, instead of at the end of 10 years?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is not the inference to be drawn from my reply. What I replied was that the Government is seriously considering the whole position in India at the moment.

Earl WINTERTON: Will the Government consider the desirability of allowing the House to discuss the question of the appointment of a Royal Commission, should the Government decide to appoint a Royal Commission, before the announcement is actually made, in view of the great importance of the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will certainly make that representation to my Noble Friend.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the electorate at present represents only 2 per cent. of the wishes of the people of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes; that is one of the great difficulties.

GOVERNMENT STATEMENT.

45. **Mr. HOPE SIMPSON** asked the Prime Minister whether it is the intention to make a statement on Indian affairs in this House concurrently with the statement which it is understood will be made by the Secretary of State for India in another place?

64. **Mr. MILNE** asked the Prime Minister whether it is his intention to make a statement on India in this House; and, if so, whether he can give a date when the statement will be made?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald): The Secretary of State for India is not making a special statement on this subject, but is only replying to a question which had been addressed to him in another place. As the hon. Members are aware, answers to questions in another place are given in a fuller and more lengthy form than is customary in this House. If, however, there is a general desire for a discussion on Indian affairs in this House, arrangements can be made for the consideration of the India Office Vote in Committee of Supply if representations are made through the usual channels. I should add that the situation in India is not escaping our notice, and is receiving the constant attention of His Majesty's Government.

Mr. SIMPSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman permit the House to discuss this question before any orders are issued by the India Office to India?

The PRIME MINISTER: It is impossible for me to give that pledge, because from day to day the Government, as my hon. Friend knows perfectly well, is in communication with the Government of India; but, if a discussion is required, the method of getting it is as is indicated in my answer.

Mr. SIMPSON: I am sorry to press this matter, but would the right hon.

Gentleman agree that, if there is a question of a re-examination of the Act of 1919, orders on that point shall not be issued before discussion?

The PRIME MINISTER: That is another point. Certainly no large departure of policy like that could possibly be inaugurated without its being first reported to this House.

FIGHTING IN PUNJAB.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON (*by Private Notice*) asked the Prime Minister whether his attention has been drawn to the engagement between Akali Sikhs and troops of the Nabha State in the Punjab, which occurred on Friday last, and in which 14 Sikhs were killed and 34 wounded; whether it is true that Dr. Kichlu has been arrested in connection with this outbreak; and whether in view of its grave character the Prime Minister can give any further information.

Mr. RICHARDS: Such information as we have received has already been published in the Press, and I have at present nothing to add. I am sending the hon. Member a copy of the latest telegram received from the Government of India, which embodies the two Press communiqués issued in India.

Mr. SIMPSON: Was the officer in command of the troops a British or a native officer, and were the troops Imperial Service or native troops?

Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS: If the telegram which the hon. Gentleman is sending to the hon. Member opposite has not been published in the Press, will he kindly circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

Following is copy of the telegram referred to:

From VICEROY, Home Department, to SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

(Dated Delhi, 23rd February, 1924.)

(Received 23rd February, 1924.)

628—3—P. Please refer to my telegram in Home Department, S—233—P. of 22nd February. Following two communiqués have been issued:

*First communique. Begins—*The recent order issued by the Administrator of Nabha State regarding the conditions of admission to Gurudwara at Jaito has been disregarded by Akalis in spite of frequent intimations, and Jatha of 500 left Bargari

in Faridkot State shortly after noon yesterday and advanced on Jaito, screened by a body of some 6,000 other Akalis who moved on a 600 yard front in great depth, armed with lathis, chavis, spears, and firearms. The Administrator with 5 state officials advanced about 100 yards to meet Akalis, gave them full warning and called on them to halt and explained that if they did not comply with his orders he would be compelled to open fire. This warning was utterly disregarded by Akalis, who hotly pursued Administrator and his party. At this point a Nabha villager received a wound from a bullet fired by Akalis. The Administrator gave orders to fire 3 rounds buckshot at leaders who were within a few yards. The lines of Akalis then swerved to their right where a platoon of Nabha infantry was in position. Order to fire 3 rounds controlled fire with service ammunition was given by Administrator. Akalis and Jatha then made for small outlying Gurudwara called Tibbi Sahib and one squadron of cavalry moved over to try and head them off. The Akalis at this moment increased their fire and delivered determined attacks led by a mounted Akali who gave orders in English to his comrades to charge. Fire from 10 dismounted cavalry checked the Akalis, but Jatha advanced under Tibbi Sahib, while about 2,000 Akalis swarmed into Tibbi Sahib Gurudwara. The remainder were already moving off and party of 2,000 gradually broke up, left room (sic ? leaving) 100 who are now under arrest at Jaito. Medical assistance was promptly rendered to the wounded. After the firing, Doctor Kitchloo and Professor Gidwani arrived on the scene in a motor, and were taken into custody. Total casualties so far ascertained are 14 dead and 34 wounded. The Jatha itself was not fired upon and no member of it was injured. Great care was taken not to interfere with the Granth Sahib which has been deposited with due respect in Dharm-sala. A special enquiry by a magistrate has been ordered. *Ends.*

*Second communique. Begins—*In this morning's communique about the occurrence at Jaito, it was stated no member of the Jatha was injured. A later report indicates that this statement requires correction. A portion of the Jatha got mixed up with the crowd of other Akalis, and 4 of them were killed and 12 wounded. It is confirmed that the Jatha, as such, was not fired upon. *Ends.*

INDIAN SUBJECTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

7. **Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the attention of the Secretary of State for India and the Government of India has been drawn to the unrest prevailing among the Indian population in South Africa and in India by reason of the promotion by the Government of the Union of South Africa of the Class Areas Bill in their legislative assembly, providing for the selective segregation in

[Lieut.-Colonel Meyler.]

non-white areas within municipalities of His Majesty's Indian subjects; and whether representations have been made thereon to the Government of the Union of South Africa, either by the Government of India or by His Majesty's Government?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The Government of India have addressed representations to the Government of the Union of South Africa regarding segregation, and may wish to address further representations to that Government regarding the actual provisions of the Bill.

Mr. E. BROWN: Arising out of the inaudibility of the hon. Gentleman's answers, will the India Office take steps to get a loud speaker?

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

SHAUKAT ALI.

Sir C. YATE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been called to the speech of Shaukat Ali in Colombo last month, in which he is reported to have stated that the Moslems of India would never repeat the mistake they had made of sending men and money to the support of the British Empire, that not one pice out of the funds of Indians and not one Indian soldier would be sent, and they wanted to close the door on the British Empire until their demands were granted; and why this man was permitted to land in Ceylon when the object of his visit there was simply to stir up disaffection?

Mr. THOMAS: I have seen certain reports in the Indian Press, but I have no official information in the matter. I will ask the Governor for a report.

SUPPLY.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS V.

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICES.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £168,460, be granted to His Majesty,

to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1924, for the Expenses in connection with His Majesty's Embassies, Missions, and Consular Establishments Abroad, and other Expenditure chargeable to the Consular Vote, including the transport and relief of refugees in the Near East, and the relief of distress in Japan."

Mr. J. HOPE SIMPSON: I rise to call attention to one of the items on which we are asked to vote money, namely, on page 12, the item LL, "refund to Indian Revenues in respect of diplomatic and consular services in China, Persia, Arabia and Siam." As a matter of fact, this Supplementary Estimate is required in respect of the consular guards in Persia, and I desire for a few moments to draw attention to the history of the expenditure under this particular head. In 1900 Lord Curzon was Viceroy of India, and his policy was one of peaceful penetration in Persia. As the Committee may remember, he started the Quetta-Nushki railway, with the intention of extending it ultimately into Persia, and at the same time he extended these consular services in Persia to a large number of towns in the interior. At that time the arrangement was that the Indian Government was to pay £6,000 a year to the British Government in respect of the consular services. From 1900 to 1904-5 the British Government received every year from the Indian Government a certain amount of money in respect of these services. The arrangement also was that any expenditure over £6,000 should be divided in equal parts between the British Government and the Indian Government, and it is in respect of this excess that we are asked to vote this Supplementary Estimate to-night.

In the years up to 1909-10 we made no payments. In 1909-10 the first payment was something over £6,000. The amount increased very rapidly until 1913-14, by which time we were paying £96,800 as our share of the excess. After the War the amounts were still greater, and in respect of 1920-23 we paid £378,680, and we are now asked to vote another £150,000 in respect of those three years, so that our share for the three years of the expenditure in excess of £6,000 is going to be £528,680. That is to say, that on those three years the Government of India has spent over £1,000,000 on the consular guards in Persia. In the present year,

when the original Estimates came up, we voted £32,500 for this service, and we are asked now to vote another £75,000, making a total of £107,500, in respect of our share of the cost of consular guards in Persia. I think that this item requires a good deal of examination on the part of the Committee. What does all this mean? If you look at the Estimates for the year you will find provision for 11 consuls in Persia, but if you look up the "Statesmen's Year Book," you will find that we have consular officers not in 11 but in 20 places.

Are these guards supplied to each of the consular officers? What are they there for? Is it suggested that they are there to control the trade routes, or to protect the consuls? If they are there to control the trade routes, what right have we to go into an independent country and control the trade routes? If they are there to protect the consuls, is it necessary that we should have an expenditure of £350,000 a year for this purpose in Persia alone? I presume that these guards are confined to Persia, though I saw in to-day's "Times" that we have withdrawn guards from the Persian Gulf, and thereby gratified the Persian authorities. Does that include the guard at Muscat? Have we guards in Arabia? Is the whole of the expenditure confined to the Persian area? Some hon. Members know Persia and the Persian people. I believe that as a rule the ordinary Persian—I am not now referring to the hill people—is not a combative person. In the north-west, in Luristan, doubtless there would be a necessity for guards if we had any consular officer in that area. As to Kurdistan, I cannot speak, but I do not think we have any consular officers there.

This railway, I understand, has been pressed on through the Baluchistan desert to a town in Persia, and there we have a consular office, and, doubtless, guards. What is the strength of those guards, and what is the necessity for them? Where are they? What control does the British Exchequer exercise over the policy which results in the spending of this money? It is not enough to say that the Indian Government demanded it, and that we agreed to it. Is there no limit to the amount that we are supposed to find for the Indian Government, if there should enter into its head the idea of increasing the consular guards in Persia?

Lieut.-Colonel T. WILLIAMS: A point I wish to raise refers to the consular guards, about whom we have heard something. I have spent a long time in Persia and was one of the officers, for a time, and had one of these consular guards. There is no doubt that there has been a very great waste of money in this matter, and I support everything that has been said by the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Hope Simpson). There is no doubt the origin of these guards—except in the Gulf where they have been for a long time—was due to the purely Imperialistic policy which we were pursuing at that time in Persia. The guards were absolutely no use. I had 10 men, a force obviously of no use as far as defence was concerned, but they were there simply to impress upon the Persians what a powerful nation we were. It was a race between ourselves and the Russians. The Russians had consular guards of about the same size, but we were always trying to get larger consular guards so as to make a greater impression upon the local people.

We have not been given any idea in this Vote as to where these guards are. In pre-War days they were scattered all over Persia from the North right away down to the South at places like Tabriz, Meshed, Shiraz and other towns. As regards the Gulf itself, the notice to which reference has been made only referred to a reduction of the guards there and did not state that they would be removed altogether. I do not suggest that the guards can be taken away altogether from the Gulf, because there we have responsibilities which date from about 300 years ago and the conditions are entirely different from the conditions inland. On the score of expense and on the score of our attitude towards the people of an independent country we should give up the guards entirely in inland Persia and retain only the very few who may be needed at the Gulf. As I say, the conditions at the Gulf are very different, and I would be prepared to support the Government in retaining them there for a certain time, but we should keep in mind the humiliating effect which the presence of these guards has on the people of an independent country. Many old customs have been kept up there, but from our own point of view, it would be infinitely better if we got rid of every single man who is not absolutely essential at the Gulf, and for that reason I hope the Government

[Lieut.-Colonel T. Williams.]
will consider the avoidance of this unnecessary expenditure and will take steps to put us on better terms with Persians in the future.

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: I cannot agree with the last speaker in his proposal to reduce the consular guards in Persia. I quite agree with the hon. and gallant Member when he said that they should be retained at the Gulf. We have a telegraph line there and a great deal which requires protection. The hon. Member referred to Meshed. I have been Consul-General there and I know how necessary it is to have men there. There was a small guard at Meshed, and, I believe, at some other places, but we have not heard where they are stationed at present; and while we might seek for that information, I think it would be most inadvisable if the Government were to think of ceasing to share the expense of a few guards at all our different consulates in Persia, some of which are situated at very out-of-the-way places. I concur to a certain extent with the hon. and gallant Member's remarks about Armenia and the Armenians, and I hope matters in that part of the world are settling down. As regards massacres, I never heard that there was much to choose between the two sides in that matter, and during the War I think one side was about as bad as the other. Let us hope that these things are done with now, and that we may leave these peoples to rest as they are. I cannot agree that our prestige and our word are now "in the mud," to use the hon. and gallant Member's expression, in the East. That is a very sweeping statement, and when one considers what General Sir Charles Harington told us of the feeling of the Turks in Constantinople, I think it shows at once how much our work is looked up to.

Lieut.-Colonel WILLIAMS: That is a personal attitude to Sir Charles Harington.

Sir C. YATE: I think our word as a nation is looked up to in the East, and I cannot agree with the hon. and gallant Member. In fact, I do not think it is right that he should speak against his own countrymen in the East in that manner.

Lieut.-Colonel WILLIAMS: May I say I was not in any way speaking against my countrymen,

Sir C. YATE: I will not add anything further than to say that I do not know whether this item in the Vote, with regard to the guards in Persia, relates in any way to the removal of the regiment which was in Bushire. I think we ought to maintain our agreement with the Indian Government to share the cost of the Consulates in Persia, and that each Consul should be given a few guards to be with him and to go with him wherever he goes, and for this reason I do not oppose this item in the Vote.

Captain EDEN: I would like to refer to the question of the consular guards in Persia. These guards can be maintained only for one of two reasons. They can be justified only because they are necessary for the safety of those whom they are there to protect. That is a subject on which it is difficult to decide without knowledge of conditions in Persia, and such knowledge it is difficult to secure. Should that not be the case—and I cannot help feeling that it is not the case—then these guards are required for another reason, and that is prestige. Here we enter upon a difficult and a somewhat contentious ground. I would ask the Committee to remember that the guards, which may seem to us, and to Europeans generally, to be very unnecessary, do in point of fact in a certain way convey a sense of power. It is even reasonable to believe that the withdrawal of these guards might on a certain kind of Persian mind create an impression of weakness on the part of the country which had withdrawn them. In view of that danger, and also of the unstable conditions in Persia and the danger that may come to Persia and British interests in Persia from one of Persia's neighbours, it would, I think, be highly inadvisable to withdraw these guards, if they really serve, as I am confident they do, as an outward symbol of British power in Persia. From that point of view, they do mean something to the Oriental mind, and it would be unwise, and it might certainly be mischievous, to reduce these guards. One would like to know exactly in what districts these guards are employed and the real purpose for which they are used. If their withdrawal would in any way affect British prestige in Persia, which is none too high at the present time, it would be indeed unwise to risk endangering our prestige still further.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. Arthur Ponsonby): The first point, which was touched on by a good many hon. Members, was the question of the expenses in respect of "Diplomatic and Consular Services in China, Persia, Arabia, and Siam," under the heading LL. The hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Simpson) really explained the case very clearly, but I do not think he quite explained sufficiently that the expense incurred covered not only the consular guards, but the actual consuls themselves. The system, which has been in practice now for some time, is that Persia is divided into, roughly speaking, two spheres. His Majesty's Government are responsible for the upkeep and appointment of 10 consuls, and the Indian Government of 12. There is consultation with regard to the appointment of these consuls, and the expenditure is met by each Government, and then the accounts are compared, the total expenditure is added together, and each Government takes a half share.

Sir FREDRIC WISE: Are any of them Britishers?

Mr. PONSONBY: I think they are all British. This is, undoubtedly, as the hon. Member for Taunton and others have said, an extremely clumsy method of proceeding.

Mr. SIMPSON: The hon. Member said there were 22 consulates, and the total is £350,000.

Mr. PONSONBY: It covers the salary of the consuls, as well as the consular guards. This method, as I say, is very clumsy. It means that the accounts are made up at the end of the year and that very often a long period intervenes. There is constant consultation between the Indian Government and His Majesty's Government, and the result is that His Majesty's Government have to pay, generally speaking, the adverse balance, because the consuls maintained by the Indian Government are more numerous and expensive. This method is wasteful and inconvenient, and it is for these reasons that the India Office and the Treasury have been in consultation as to whether some different method cannot be found for arranging for the payment of these consular officers and their guards.

They think it would be better that each Government should be responsible for its particular set of consuls and should pay for them out of its own revenue, and by that means a considerable saving could be effected. The discussions are now going to be continued, and the Treasury, the Foreign Office, and the India Office will confer together with a view to adopting a better scheme, which should involve a saving and also would be more practical.

I do not think there is any question of the abolition of the consular guards. I think it has been rightly said by my right hon. Friend the Member for Canterbury that sometimes they are necessary actually for safety's sake, and no doubt a certain prestige is added to a European official by the presence of a guard. I have not been in Persia myself, but I know that in Turkey the presence of Kavasses round diplomatic or consular officials does certainly help them in the exercise of their responsibility, so that there is no question of the abolition of these consular guards, and there is—and I hope it will work out into a practical plan—hope of getting a different method from the method at present followed, by which both Governments may effect some saving, and the consular officers and their guards may be appointed in another way. The hon. Member for Taunton asked whether there were consular guards at Muscat. No, there are consular guards in Arabia, at Bahrein and at Koweit, but not at Muscat. I cannot tell him exactly what is the strength of the consular guards for these districts. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kennington (Lieut.-Colonel Williams) raised several questions, and also touched on this particular question of the guards, on which he was able to give his own personal experience. He complained of waste of money, with which I am ready to agree, but I think he went rather too far when he said, in regard to our position in the East, that the British word is not looked up to any more in the East. No doubt the policy pursued in recent years has not been one which His Majesty's present advisers would have adopted, but I think, perhaps, that, with the advent of the present Government to power, the British word will rise in esteem.

Mr. BECKER: With regard to Sub-head LL—Refund to Indian Revenues

[Mr. Becker.]

in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Services in China, Persia, Arabia and Siam—I do not know whether I should be in order, on this Subhead, in raising the question of the cost of diplomatic services all over the world, or whether I must confine my observations to the four countries mentioned?

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member certainly cannot go all over the world.

Mr. BECKER: This is what it says:

"In the original Estimate provision was made in the sum of £32,500 for payment to the Government of India in respect of expenditure on Indian troops employed as Consular Guards in Persia, which expenditure is shared equally by the British and Indian Governments. The payment required is now estimated at £150,000 for the period from July, 1920, to 31st March, 1923, and £75,000 in respect of the year 1923-24."

Does that mean that we are to go on at this rate in the future, *ad infinitum*, doling out the taxpayers' money on these arid deserts? Is that necessary when we have such things as aeroplanes? What do these troops do in Persia? We might be informed why they are there. We have got beyond the militarist stage now, when we used to have sentries standing in front of black and white boxes.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must not travel so wide. This is not a new service, and he must restrict himself to the increased expenditure shown on the Vote.

Mr. BECKER: I was asking why it is necessary to have Indian troops at all in Persia. I think there should be no Indian troops in Persia, and that the whole Vote is a gross extravagance and purely throwing money away. I imagine that these Indian troops that are in Persia are doing their duty as troops, and troops usually find themselves on sentry. No doubt, they are on guard outside consular offices in Persia, but are they there for the purpose of looking—

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot discuss whether the troops should be there. He can only discuss the increased expenditure—not the original policy.

Mr. S. ROBERTS: On a point of Order. Is it not the fact that the original Estimate was only for £32,000, while this Supplementary Estimate is for £192,500, and in the case of so large a discrepancy is not the Committee at liberty to range over the whole subject?

Mr. THOMAS: On that point of Order. One can appreciate the very careful scrutiny of the Vote, and I only want to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that under the general flippancy of the hon. Member's remarks one or two things have been said about the Indian guards; and, as hon. Members on the other side of the Committee know perfectly well, while this matter may be treated with levity here, there may be considerable misapprehension if what is said is read in other places. I hope that hon. Gentlemen will recollect that under the levity of the situation there are serious possibilities.

Mr. JAMES HOPE: Has it not frequently been held that, when a revised Estimate is greatly in excess of the original Estimate, it can be discussed and treated as a new service?

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It is purely a matter of degree. When there is a considerable discrepancy more latitude is allowed than when the discrepancy is a small one.

Sir KINGSLEY WOOD: Is it not the fact that this Estimate is for five times the amount of the original Estimate, and, that being the case, is not the whole subject open to discussion?

Mr. BECKER: I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman thinks that I am in any way being flippant about these guards. I have no intention of being flippant. I quite realise that people's lives in the whole area may be dependent upon them, but I wish to find out how it is that the expenditure is so enormously increased that it is five times the original amount. I presume that means that there are five times as many soldiers as there were when the original Estimate was made, and I think I am entitled to ask why there are so many more. Have they really work to do, or are they there simply to overawe the natives? The number of soldiers must now be very large, because the original Estimate was for £32,500.

I should like to know how many there are, how many officers there are, and how many non-commissioned officers and rank and file. Do the rank and file outnumber the officers or do the officers outnumber the rank and file? Is the increase in expenditure due to better pay and conditions for the troops? Is it due to giving them more rations? Are they getting more ammunition? Is it that they are getting new uniforms? Are they providing bands or buying new rifles? Are they having artillery supplied to them? What is the reason for this tremendous expenditure? It cannot be explained away by saying that when the original Estimate was made no one had any idea that these men were going to become so expensive. Military units can estimate very closely what their expenditure is going to be and what their rations and their uniforms will cost, what is the wear and tear of their clothes and what their puttees and their trousers will cost, and their rifles and bayonets and entrenching tools. You can estimate quite safely what a given number of men are going to cost. When we find there is five times more money than was expected, can it mean that these men have been wiped out by some dread disease or that they have been treacherously attacked and have had to be replaced at a tremendous cost? It is £192,000. You could run a very nice strike on £192,000. Are there more troops there than when the original Estimate was made? If not, where has the money gone? If they are there, why are they there? Is it necessary to have so many there? What has happened in the meantime to make it necessary to increase the number of troops by five times? We know that when a military force is in a particular place, a few men may attract a horde of Persians or some wild tribes may come to attack the consular offices because there is a force, and it is natural when you see force to go and smash it. We are keeping Indian troops in Persia and agitating the native mind, and as the years go by we find it necessary to spend more money on the business, so I presume we have to have more troops, and more troops will encourage more resistance; and if the expenditure keeps progressively rising it is safe to assume that the danger to the consular office is getting greater through attracting more enemies.

Mr. N. MACLEAN: On a point of Order. Do I understand the hon. Member is addressing us on the policy of general disarmament?

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must really keep to the subject matter of the Vote. He is travelling far too wide.

Mr. BECKER: I am trying very hard because the troops in Persia, which were estimated to cost £32,000, have cost £150,000. Have we more troops in Persia? Are they all Indian troops or is it because there are white officers attached to them that the expenditure has gone up?

Mr. MACLEAN: On a point of Order. Is there not a Standing Order against repetition?

Mr. BECKER: If hon. Members raise points of order I have to go back again.

Mr. KIRKWOOD: On a point of Order. I should like to ask for information. Is this what they call Parliamentary procedure?

Mr. BECKER: I am awfully sorry. I should like to ask this question. Are there more troops—

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member keeps on repeating his argument, I shall have to ask him to discontinue his speech.

Question put, and agreed to.

Tuesday, 26th February, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SMALL-POX.

32. **Mr. WHITELEY** asked the Secretary of State for War how many cases of, and deaths from, small-pox occurred in the various commands of the British and Indian Armies during the years 1921 and 1922?

Mr. WALSH: With the hon. Member's permission, I will circulate these statistics in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following are the statistics promised:

NUMBER of Cases of, and Deaths from, Small-pox—British and Indian Armies, 1921 and 1922.

British Army.

Command.	1921.		1922.	
	Cases.	Deaths.	Cases.	Deaths.
India	32	7	25	10
Iraq	18	4	6	Nil
Turkey	Nil	Nil	5	Nil
All other Commands	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	50	11	36	10

Indian Army.

Northern	25	2	No	No
Southern	13	1	figures	figures
Eastern	8	Nil	available.	available.
Western	5	1		
Total	51	4		

35. **Mr. DUNNICO** asked the Secretary of State for War what was the strength of the British and Indian troops, respectively, in Mesopotamia in the years 1917, 1918 and 1919; how many cases of, and deaths from, small-pox were reported amongst those troops in the years in question; and how many of such cases and deaths occurred amongst doctors and nurses?

Mr. WALSH: As regards the first part of the question, with the hon. Member's permission, I will circulate the figures in

the OFFICIAL REPORT. As regards the second part, I much regret that I am not in a position to give the statistics asked for. Owing to the volume and complexity of the particulars in question, they have not yet been reduced to statistical form. The Official History of the War, Medical Services, Hygiene of the War, Volume II, gives a good deal of general information as to small-pox in Mesopotamia and elsewhere.

Following are the figures:

STRENGTH OF BRITISH AND INDIAN TROOPS IN MESOPOTAMIA AS SHOWN IN STATISTICAL ABSTRACT, 1917-18, AND OVERSEAS WHITE BOOK FOR 1919.

	British.		Dominion Troops.		Indian Troops (excluding Native followers, etc.).	
	Officers.	O. Ranks.	Officers.	O. Ranks.	Officers.	O. Ranks.
1st March, 1917 ...	4,687	65,785	—	—	1,905	77,154
1st March, 1918 ...	7,383	115,981	10	380	2,889	145,901
1st April, 1919 ...	4,560	28,608	2	98	2,124	94,893

Monday, 3rd March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SALT DUTY.

1. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what amount accrued to the revenues of India from the

salt duty for the financial year previously to the imposition of the recent enhancement of duty, and what amount has been received from the enhanced duty; and what quantities of salt, in the same periods respectively, have been removed from Government go-downs and warehouses?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The answer

to the first part of the question is Rs. 682 lakhs and Rs. 870 lakhs, respectively; to the second part of the question 544 and 380 lakhs of maunds, respectively. The second figure represents in each case the latest estimate for the current financial year expiring 31st March next.

MR. B. G. HORNIMAN.

2. Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the reasons for the continued refusal to allow Mr. B. G. Horniman, editor of the "Bombay Chronicle," to return to India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Governments of India and Bombay, in consideration of Mr. Horniman's history while he was in India, and of his published writings since his deportation, have repeatedly decided against allowing him to return. Only a few days ago the Government of India, in the Legislative Assembly, resisted a Motion for permitting him to return, and it would be difficult for my Noble Friend to insist, in the present condition of Indian affairs, that they should withdraw their objections.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Does the hon. Gentleman consider it right that a man should be deprived of his livelihood without any chance of making a defence or any sort of public inquiry?

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Do we understand that it is the hon. Gentleman's idea that this order should be rescinded? The last part of his answer gives that impression.

RETIRED BRITISH OFFICERS (INCOME TAX).

3. Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether retired officers of the British Service residing in India are compelled to pay both British and Indian Income Tax on their retired pay; and, if so, for what reason?

Mr. RICHARDS: Pension provided out of public revenues of the United Kingdom for a retired officer residing in British India, and received by him in that country, would be liable both to British and Indian Income Tax, but the British and Indian Acts relating to Income Tax provide machinery whereby relief may be obtained from double taxation.

POLICE FORCES.

4. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the annual police report of the provinces of Behar and Orissa and Bombay and Sind, published in the Indian Press of 18th January and 1st February, respectively, reporting the large increase of riots in Bihar, engendered by the non-co-operation movement and the reductions in the Sind district police to about 60 per cent. of its former total, and what steps are being taken to restore these police forces to their former state and to put a stop to the non-co-operation agitation that is causing all the trouble?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen the reports referred to which relate to the year 1922. In Bihar and Orissa the conditions were largely due to the fact that the non-co-operation movement was at its zenith during several months. At the close of the year the strength of the police was only 18 less than the strength at the end of the preceding year. As regards Sind, the figure quoted in the question relates to one district only in Sind, the Upper Sind Frontier, and only to the police in the rural portion of that district. At its headquarters the force was increased by 25 per cent., and the reduction over the whole district was 12 per cent. only. Even after the reductions made in Sind, the proportion of police to population was considerably higher than in the rest of the Bombay Presidency. As regards present day conditions, I would refer to the last sentence in the reply given to the hon. and gallant Member on the 18th instant.

Sir C. YATE: Does the hon. Gentleman consider that the non-co-operation movement is less now than it was then?

Mr. RICHARDS: I suggest that it has changed its aspect very considerably during the last 12 months.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Has the reduction of the police in Sind been followed by an increase of criminal activity or not?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no evidence to that effect.

CROWN COLONIES COMMITTEE.

5. Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Crown Colonies Committee to be appointed by the Government of

[Mr. Wardlaw-Milne.]

India and referred to in the Viceroy's speech on 31st January has in fact been appointed; and, if so, who are the members of that Committee and when and where it will meet?

Mr. RICHARDS: I hope to be able to announce the names of the Committee very shortly. It is hoped that it will be ready to meet about the end of March. Its meetings will be held in London.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT (PAY).

6. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will take steps to see that all officers of the Indian Political Department receive equal pay for equal service; whether he is aware that officers taken from the Indian Army in the Indian Political Department receive lower pay than those taken from the Indian Civil Service, although they do exactly the same work; and whether, seeing that in the course of 23 years' service the difference amounts to Rs.36,600, he will do away with this anomaly?

Mr. RICHARDS: This matter is at present under consideration in India, and I understand that the Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India proposed to include it in the scope of their inquiry. The Secretary of State is communicating with the Government of India on the subject.

CENSORSHIP.

7. Mr. GILBERT asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether there is at present any censorship of native or British newspapers in India; what are the powers which are exercised under such censorship; and whether the officials employed for the purpose are native or British?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no Press censorship in British India.

COTTON OUTPUT.

9. Sir WALTER de FRECE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the total output of cotton in India during the last three seasons; the amount retained for home consumption and the amount exported, with, in the latter case, its allocation according to the purchasing countries; and the measures now in progress or under consideration to stimulate cultivation in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: With the hon Member's permission, I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT a statement containing information which I think will meet his views.

Mr. REMER: Will the hon. Gentleman also say what steps can be taken to improve the quality of the cotton produced in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: That does not arise.

The following is the statement:

Area and yield of Cotton in India.

					1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.
Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	21,340,000	18,454,000	21,077,000
Yield { (bales)	...	...	...	...	3,601,000	4,479,000	5,181,000
Yield { (tons)	...	...	...	...	643,000	800,000	925,000
<i>Exports of Raw Cotton from India by Sea.</i>							
To United Kingdom	...	...	tons		17,144	6,390	34,220
" Germany	...	...	"		35,959	41,918	46,891
" Netherlands	...	...	"		2,110	958	1,717
" Belgium	...	...	"		43,378	35,411	45,011
" France	...	...	"		6,867	10,122	22,557
" Spain	...	...	"		13,675	5,387	11,726
" Italy	...	...	"		38,016	27,570	43,094
" Austria	...						
" Hungary	...	...	"		6,098	{ 5,978	7,595
" Ceylon	...	...	"		685	484	926
" Indo-China	...	...	"		1,620	5,275	3,553
" China	...	...	"		34,247	77,758	88,803
" Japan	...	...	"		167,681	314,333	289,465
" United States of America	...	...	"		1,675	1,639	3,898
" Other Countries	...	...	"		1,430	579	941
Total	...	...	{ tons		370,585	533,802	600,897
			{ bales		2,073,856	2,981,361	3,362,601

The new area that will be brought under cotton in consequence of the Sakkur barrage project is estimated at not less than 400,000 acres. Experts are at work on cotton in all the provinces where it is grown. Their efforts, as also those of the Government of India, are mainly directed towards improving the quality of the cotton, but success in this direction must ordinarily entail some increase in the amount of cotton grown.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

8. **Lieut.-Colonel Sir F. HALL** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what steps the present Government propose to take in view of the fact that the newly-elected India Legislative Assembly, on the motion of Pandit Motilal Nehru, has, by a large majority, passed a Resolution in support of the setting up immediately of a Home Rule Constitution for India and the supersession of the Indian Government Act of 1919?

Mr. RICHARDS: My hon. and gallant Friend appears to be misinformed as to the terms of the motion of Pandit Motilal Nehru adopted by the newly-elected Indian Legislative Assembly. The Resolution referred to is, no doubt, that which was passed in favour of setting up a round-table conference to frame the scheme of a constitution. My Noble Friend has not yet received any recommendations from the Government of India in favour of taking action on this Resolution. I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT the text as received by telegram of certain passages in two speeches delivered in the course of the debate on the Resolution in the Assembly by Sir Malcolm Hailey, speaking on behalf of the Government of India and after consultation with His Majesty's Government.

Sir F. HALL: Can we rely on the Government taking any necessary steps to see that the Regulations of the 1919 Act are carried out?

Mr. RICHARDS: Certainly.

Following is the information promised:

"EXTRACTS from speech by Sir M. HAILEY in the Legislative Assembly on 8th February, 1924.

"Sir M. Hailey explained why it was impossible to entertain any demand for immediate steps in the direction required

by the Resolution, referring more particularly to the problems as presented by the Indian States, protection of minorities, communal differences, the Army, and condition of the electorate. After defining the position of the Government in this respect, he proceeded to state the action which the latter proposed to take in regard to the demand for advance in reforms generally. 'That is,' he said, 'the definition of our position: now for the action we propose to take. We do not limit ourselves to demanding that the system should be further tested. We propose to make a serious attempt to investigate justifiable complaints against the working of the scheme in practice, to assess the causes, and to examine the remedies necessary. We claim that this must precede any general inquiry into policy and scheme of the Act or general advance within the Act itself. In investigating these difficulties and defects in the actual working of the present system, we shall consult the Local Governments on the subject, and we shall not close our ears to representations from outside. It may be that the remedy for these difficulties will be found by using rules making the power within the Act: I refer to the utilisation of those sections, to which reference is so often made, 19A, 45A, and 96B. It may even be—I can say nothing as to this—that the inquiry may show that some changes are required in the structure of the Act in order to rectify the definite and ascertained defects experienced in the actual working. When we have our results, and those results are ready for presentation to Parliament, then, before they are finally presented to Parliament, we shall ask the Secretary of State to give every opportunity for discussion in this country, both in Legislature and elsewhere. That is as far as we can go at present, but I believe this undertaking gives a guarantee that we are determined genuinely to discharge our duty to reforms scheme and to prepare the way for the next stage of advance.'

Later, in correction of another speaker, the Home Member repeated his position as follows: 'Government of India are prepared to examine, in consultation with Local Governments, into the existence of any defects in the working of the Act, as revealed by experience, with a view to their remedy. That was the statement that I made this morning. I did not say that we were prepared to set on foot any wide investigation as to the complete revision of the Act such as Mr. Dumasia seems to suggest.'

"EXTRACTS from speech by Sir M. HAILEY in the Legislative Assembly on 18th February, 1924.

"We have again considered the position very carefully, and I am anxious to emphasise that in what I say I speak with the full authority of His Majesty's Government. We still hold to the general position I took up on behalf of the Government. Before His Majesty's Government are able to consider the question of amending the

constitution, as distinct from such amendment of the Act as may be required to rectify any administrative imperfections, there must be full investigation of any defects or difficulties which may have arisen in the working of the transitional constitution now in force. Neither they nor we would be justified in considering changes in that constitution unless they were in possession of full information which our investigations will place in their hands. In 1919, Parliament, after the fullest consideration, laid down a scheme transitional in its nature but, nevertheless, carefully devised, with a view to effecting steps necessary for progressive realisation of ideals embodied in the preamble of the Act. It is not to be supposed that the British people would be lightly inclined to consider a change in that constitution, and it is bound to concentrate attention for the present on such imperfections in working as may have been disclosed by the experience of the last three years. I said that we have carefully reconsidered the general position, and we hold to the precise attitude which I then took up save in one respect. If our inquiries into the defects in the working of Act show the feasibility and possibility of any advance within the Act, that is to say, by use of the rule-making power already provided by Parliament under the Statute, we are willing to make recommendations to this effect; but if our inquiries show that no advance is possible without amending the constitution, then the question of advance must be left as an entirely open and separate issue on which the Government is in no way committed. To that extent, the scope of our inquiries goes somewhat beyond that originally assigned to it, but I must again emphasise the fact that it does not extend beyond that scope to the amendment of the constitution itself.

We are warned, on the other hand, that our inquiries will not be good enough and do not dispel mistrust. In spite of all we have done, mistrust still seems to be Government of India's fate. We are clear in our conscience; we must look to history for a justice which our contemporaries deny to us, and have no doubt that history will endorse our own conviction of consistent honesty of our purpose and reality of our efforts. But it offends even more against my sense of justice that this charge should be brought against the English people, who have initiated and fostered liberal institutions throughout the world. That mistrust apparently extends to the present Government. For myself, I do not believe that, where Indian policy is concerned, change of helmsman can mean a change in the course of the ship's statesmanship. But again I speak with full authority when I say they have noted with great concern the distrust shown by the advocates of constitutional reform regarding the good faith of His Majesty's Government in their attitude towards constitutional progress. His Majesty's Government are sincerely convinced that the only hope for a satisfactory solution of the problem of the Government of India lies in pursuance of the policy adopted in the Government of India Act and set forth in its preamble. They associate themselves with the Indian party of consti-

tutional progress in the effort towards the institution of responsible Government, but they believe that this aim can only be realised if that party will co-operate with the Government of India in enabling the Act of 1919 to be administered as efficiently as possible in the interest of good government."

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

POLITICAL SITUATION.

Mr. RAMSAY MUIR asked the Prime Minister whether, in view of the gravity of the political situation in India and the rapidity with which it is developing, this House will be informed as to the policy of the Government and afforded an opportunity of discussing it, at an early date, in advance of the presentation of the Indian Estimates?

The PRIME MINISTER: As I stated in reply to a question on this subject on Monday last, the situation in India is receiving the constant attention of His Majesty's Government. I regret, however, that owing to the large amount of urgent financial business I cannot see my way to devote a special day for a discussion on this subject other than on the Vote for the India Office in Committee of Supply.

BURMA MILITARY POLICE.

Lieut.-Colonel FREMANTLE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he has received a reply to the further communication to the Government of India made by his predecessor regarding the incomplete payment to officers of the Burma military police of the special Burma allowance authorised under the Government of Burma Financial Department Notification, No. 24, of 25th March, 1920?

Mr. RICHARDS: A final answer has not yet been received, but the Government of India have been asked for it by telegram.

Tuesday, 4th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MAJOR-GENERAL D. SHAW.

27. Mr. BECKER asked the Secretary of State for War if he will reconsider the

case of Major-General D. Shaw, who, whilst general-officer commanding the Karachi brigade, was made responsible for the Karachi troop train incident during the summer of 1916?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): My Noble Friend the Secretary of State for India regrets that he is unable to reopen this question, which has been very fully examined by his predecessors. General Shaw was offered a fresh inquiry, but found himself unable to accept the offer.

Mr. BECKER: I do not want to raise this question at length—[HON. MEMBERS: "Speech!"] He was a serving officer. [HON. MEMBERS: "Speech!"]

Mr. THURTLÉ: Before the hon. Gentleman answers that question—

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not allow the supplementary question to be put.

TROOPS (DISPOSITION).

38. Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY asked the Secretary of State for War how many British troops are stationed at home and how many abroad; how many of these latter are on territory outside the British Empire, not counting the Army of Occupation in Germany; and how many Indian troops are employed outside India?

Mr. WALSH: According to the latest return the number of British troops is 111,039 at home and 102,893 abroad, including India. In addition there are 3,140 Indian and Colonial troops serving under the War Office. Of these numbers 12,100 are in Egypt and 3,190 in the Middle East and in North China. There are also approximately 8,460 Indian troops outside India serving under the Air Ministry, the Foreign Office or Colonial Governments.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Does the Middle East in this case mean Iraq or does it include places outside it?

Mr. WALSH: Iraq mainly, but taking in some of the undefined and almost undefinable territory which adjoins it. I could give the exact line if my hon. and gallant Friend desires.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LIEUTENANT C. H. CLENDINING (INDIA OFFICE).

Mr. MILLS asked the Secretary of State for War on what grounds the case of Lieutenant C. H. Clendining was transferred to the India Office for inquiry; and if he will grant an impartial inquiry into the case.

Mr. WALSH: This case has been referred to the India Office, and to the Government of India, for inquiry, because the incidents complained of took place in India, and the Army Council require information from the Indian Government before dealing with the case. When this has been received, the Army Council will be in a position to investigate the case in accordance with the procedure laid down in Section 42 of the Army Act for dealing with the complaint of any officer who considers himself wronged.

TRADE FACILITIES BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Question again proposed.

Mr. A. M. SAMUEL: I see another method of bringing employment to this country which is much better than electrifying the home railways. For the last two days we have been reading about the Indian Budget and the decision to separate the railway figures from the general revenue figures. It is proposed now by Sir Basil Blackett to separate the railway administration from the general administration of India. A wise decision in my humble judgment. Here you have some 350,000,000 people, and yet the railway mileage of India is no bigger than it is in the Argentine with 10 million people. Here you have a great opportunity of advancing the prosperity of India by the extension of railway undertakings. [An HON. MEMBER: "By means of loans."] That is so, and with our guarantee under this Bill, but in the case of India railway development you have a good hold on the borrowers. If we give our guarantee to India it is on condition, under this Bill,

[Mr. A. M. Samuel.]

that she takes the goods paid for by the loans, from us. What a splendid thing it is to be able to extend the railways in India because there is no greater civilising influence in any country than the extending of communications except the extension of the art of reading and writing. In this direction the extensions of rail and river services and canals have done more than anything we can think of, and you have now an opportunity of helping India, improving the condition of her people and at the same time, in due course, of putting money into your own pocket by extending the railway equipment of India. Directly you make India more prosperous, she has more produce to sell, and will be able to buy more, and if she does not buy from us she buys from somebody else. We get our share, if not by direct or triangular exchange, we get it even by polygonal exchange. Take the case of the Cautley Canal on the Ganges, the Chenab and Jhelum canals. Those three canals have been working beneficially and profitably in certain portions of Northern India. Let us go on with that policy for India and for our unemployed at home. That is how and where to use the guarantees under this Bill.

Railways and canals have rendered famine half as deadly to the Indian people as it was before Indian railway and irrigation schemes should be our first policy under this Bill. It is all nonsense talking about the electrifying of lengths of lines here, and taking in our own washing, when you have got India in front of you and when to help to develop the railways of India benefits not only us but the Indian people as well.

Wednesday, 5th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

TIBET (TASHI LAMA).

10. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD BURY** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received a report from the British Agent at Gyantse with regard to the reported flight of the Tashi

Lama from Shigatse; whether he has any information with regard to the reasons for his flight; and whether he has gone to India or to China?

Mr. PONSONBY: The Tashi Lama fled from Shigatse towards the end of last December. The reason for his flight appears to be a disagreement with the Tibetan Government. His present whereabouts are unknown; he has not entered India, and no intelligence has been received of his having reached China.

Thursday, 6th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

FLIGHT-LIEUTENANTS' PAY (EGYPT AND INDIA).

75. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air why flight-lieutenants in the Royal Air Force in Egypt receive £70 a month and on transfer to India only £50 a month?

Mr. LEACH: At the present rate of exchange the difference is not quite so considerable as is suggested in the question, the figures being, approximately: in Egypt, flight-lieutenants entitled to allowances at married rates, £68 a month, other flight-lieutenants, £60; in India, flight-lieutenants (married or unmarried), 850 rupees or £59 a month. As regards this difference, I would refer the hon. and gallant Member to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for India on the 18th February last in regard to the pay of British Army personnel in India.

Sir C. YATE: Will the Under-Secretary see to it that the Air officers transferred from Egypt to India do not lose so much pay?

Mr. LEACH: All these questions will be revised in July.

Sir C. YATE: Will not the July revision mean a reduction and not an increase of pay?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: Will the hon. Member bear in mind the high cost of living in Egypt?

Mr. LEACH: All relevant matters will be carefully considered.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ORDERS.

Sir J. LEIGH asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether British firms tendering for orders for India have to give an assurance that their names are on the King's Roll; and, if not, whether, seeing that the acceptance of a tender from a German firm not only increases unemployment in this country, but is also against the policy of the Government to assist ex-service men, he proposes to make compulsory such a condition of tendering?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to both parts of the question is in the negative. As regards the practice of the High Commissioner in preferring, other things being equal, a firm which is on the King's Roll to one which is not, I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Bilston (Lieut.-Colonel Howard-Bury) on 25th February, and, as regards the Government of India's general policy of buying in the best market, to the reply to the hon. Member for Moseley (Mr. Hannon) on 18th February.

Monday, 10th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

AKALI DISTURBANCES, JAITO.

2. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what action has been taken with regard to the 700 men detained over the affair at Jaito, in Nabha State of the Punjab; whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a second jatha of 500 have started on 28th February for Jaito; and what action he proposes to take to prevent any further disturbances?

7. **Mr. HOPE SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that on 28th February a band of 500 Akali Sikh

pilgrims left Amritsar for Jaito, in Nabha territory; and whether any and, if so, what steps are being taken to prevent a repetition of the disastrous results of the previous pilgrimage of this kind?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. R. Richards): So far as the Secretary of State is aware, no final decision has yet been taken in regard to the 700 men detained. Judicial investigations have been proceeding. As regards the second jatha, I understand that the local authorities have taken steps to make it clear that the conditions previously laid down must be maintained, and I have no doubt that they will take all other possible steps to guard against a repetition of the occurrence of the 21st February. The Akalis themselves have issued an appeal to the public that crowds should not accompany the jatha, and I trust that violence will not be used on their side on this occasion and that the question of using force against the jatha will not arise.

Mr. SIMPSON: Can my hon. Friend tell us what were the conditions previously laid down?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like to have notice of that question.

Mr. SIMPSON: But it arises out of the answer in which the hon. Gentleman said the conditions previously laid down should be maintained.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Can the Government not take power to stop this semi-political movement?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is rather a difficult question, if I may say so, partly political and partly religious.

5. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of Indian men and women killed or wounded during the recent disturbances which took place at Jaito, and how many soldiers or police were either killed or wounded; what kind of firearms or other weapons, if any, were carried by the processionists; and, in order that the full facts may be known, will the Secretary of State ask the Viceroy of India to order the holding of a full inquiry into the whole of the proceedings which led up to the disturbance and consequent destruction of life?

Mr. RICHARDS: The total casualties, as reported by the Government of India, are 21 dead (including those who died subsequently of wounds) and 33 wounded. There were no casualties to women, or to soldiers or police. As regards the second part of the question, the report of the investigating magistrate, who, I may mention, is himself a Sikh, states that the mob was armed with all sorts of weapons, including firearms. Eye-witnesses mention guns, pistols, lathis (quarterstaves), and chavis (knives or halberds) and spears. The Secretary of State has no doubt that the Government of India will take all necessary steps to ascertain the full facts, and he does not think it necessary to make the suggestion proposed in the question.

Sir HENRY CRAIK: Is it not the case that these disturbances arose from an internecine feud between two sects of religion, and that the only reason for the Government interfering was to try to preserve both factions from one another?

Mr. LANSBURY: May I ask the hon. Member how the Government of India, or whoever gave him the information he has given to the House, accounts for the fact that neither police nor soldiers were injured by this mob of people, who are supposed to have been carrying firearms and other dangerous weapons?

Sir H. CRAIK: May I have an answer to my question as to the cause of this riot being a fight between two religious sects?

Mr. LANSBURY: That is not what I am bothering about. Why were these people killed without arms? I wish to give notice that I will raise this question on the Motion for the adjournment to-night, if no other hon. Member has got that opportunity before me.

PUBLIC SERVICES (LEE COMMISSION).

6. Mr. SIMPSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to state when the Report or an interim Report by the Lee Commission on the Indian public services will be published?

Mr. RICHARDS: I can add nothing to the reply I gave to the hon. Member on 18th February, except that I understand that the taking of evidence has now been completed and that the Com-

mission is actively engaged in drawing up its report.

MURDERS, KOHAT.

8. Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India why the Indian Government did not insist on the surrender of the Kohat gang of murderers; and what guarantee the Government of India have that the men who were arrested in Afghanistan and deported by His Highness the Ameer to Turkestan will be kept in custody there and will not again regain their freedom?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald): I have been asked to answer this question. In the absence of any extradition treaty with Afghanistan upon which to base a request for the surrender of the gang, the matter could only be dealt with in the light of broad political considerations, among which was the fact that their surrender would have been unprecedented and contrary to the Afghan doctrine of asylum. His Majesty's Government decided in the circumstances to accept the alternative of deportation to Afghan Turkestan. One of the conditions is that the Afghan Government give an official guarantee that the gang will be kept under strict surveillance in a circumscribed area and that no member will ever be allowed to return to the vicinity of the Indian frontier.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this right of asylum does not apply in these cases?

The PRIME MINISTER: My information is that it does, and we have been going on that assumption.

DEVIL DANCERS (BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION).

10. Lieut.-Colonel JAMES asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that attempts are being made in Darjeeling to recruit a troupe of Lama devil dancers to perform at the Wembley Exhibition; whether he is aware that devil dances have a deep religious significance to the Buddhist priests and other Buddhists in Tibet and that the proposed scheme is arousing strong feelings of religious resentment and apprehension; and whether he will take steps to see that their susceptibilities are not outraged by the engagement of this troupe?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand as a result of inquiries here that one of the Indian *concessionnaires* at Wembley has made arrangements in India for the recruitment of a troupe of the description indicated, but further inquiries are being made of the Government of India, with special reference to the points raised in the question.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM.

11. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India or the Secretary of State for India has received a request from representative men in India asking that a round-table conference between representatives of the British Government and representatives of all sections of Indian nationalist opinion should take place in order to discuss and, if possible, agree to plans for a further instalment of self-government for the people of India, and, if so, what reply has been given to such request?

1. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will consider the desirability of appointing a commission to examine the working of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms with a view to seeing what greater powers and what extensions of the franchise are immediately possible?

Mr. RICHARDS: The attitude of the Government of India has already been indicated by the speeches of Sir Malcolm Hailey, copies of which were circulated in the OFFICIAL REPORT of 3rd March, and an inquiry, on the lines there indicated, is being initiated by the Government of India. His Majesty's Government are continuing to seek other avenues by which the present situation might be eased. As regards the extension of the franchise, it is not understood that this has been advocated by any of the speakers who urged the grant of increased powers to the Indian Legislatures, and, in view of the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in 1919, my Noble Friend is not prepared to take any immediate steps in this direction.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is the hon. Member aware that the remarks he has just made, in reference to seeking other avenues, are very indefinite, and will he tell us what he means?

Sir H. CRAIK: Will the hon. Member state distinctly whether the Government intend to adhere to the provisions of the Act of 1919, which defer the revision of the constitution for ten years?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is exactly the position of the Government.

STRIKE OF BOMBAY MILL WORKERS.

STATEMENT BY **Mr. RICHARDS.**

Mr. LANSBURY (*by Private Notice*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House any information respecting the reported disturbances said to have taken place in connection with the strike of mill workers in Bombay. How many civilians, if any, have been killed or injured? How many police or soldiers were either killed or injured? What number of men, women and children are involved in the dispute, and can he tell the House the causes of the strike and what action the Governor-General or other persons in authority are taking to bring the parties together, in order to discover a means of settlement?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of Bombay, telegraphing on the 8th March, report that on the morning of the 7th serious disturbances broke out in the mill area in Bombay. They were caused by a notice posted up over the signature of the Chairman of the Millowners' Association. The notice stated that certain workers were prepared to resume work without conditions, and that the mills would re-open on the 8th. An attempt was made to set fire to mills, which was frustrated by the arrival of the police. There was extensive stone-throwing. The police guard was hemmed in at De Lisle Road, where dense crowds of strikers had collected. The guard was stoned from close quarters, and fired one or two shots in self-defence. The Commissioner of Police arrived with a police patrol, and the mob dispersed. In this area no casualties were noticed among the strikers, but one mounted policeman was seriously injured by stones, and there were other minor casualties among the armed police.

Later on, on the same road, the crowds re-formed, and a police picket was

[Mr. Richards.]
 attacked on all sides near the Union Mill. It was compelled to open fire in self-defence. Two strikers were killed and three wounded, and one ringleader was arrested.

In the afternoon, at the north end of the same road, disturbance broke out again. In the compound of the Elphin-stone Mill the strikers set fire to cotton bales and heavily stoned the fire brigade, injuring three firemen.

The troops have been called out, and are kept ready in the disturbed area. The situation is serious, but all is now quiet, except for isolated cases of assault.

As regards the last part of the question, it was reported on 31st January that the total number of men affected by the strike was approximately 150,000. The strikers demand payment of a bonus, which, during recent years, has been paid annually at the New Year. The mill-owners are stated to have warned the workers last July that they would be unable to pay the bonus this year. The industry is passing through a period of depression owing to the high price of raw cotton. I have no detailed information as to action taken by the local authorities to discover a means of settlement of the dispute, but on 20th February it was reported that the mill-owners had agreed to the appointment of a Committee to consider the bonus question.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: How much damage has already been done by the strikers?

Mr. RICHARDS: I cannot add anything to the information.

ADJOURNMENT (QUESTIONS FOR DEBATE).

Mr. LANSBURY: I gave notice earlier in the afternoon that I would raise the question on which my hon. Friend has given me an answer, but I have been asked by the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. Macpherson) to waive my right, if I have a right, for to-night, and I should like to give notice that I will raise the question to-morrow night instead, with your permission.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. Members will have to try to come to some arrangement

in these matters. I have a notice from the Noble Lord the Member for Hornsey (Viscount Ednam) for to-night, but I have no notice either with regard to to-morrow or Wednesday. Perhaps hon. Members will arrange among themselves.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818.

Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the Repressive Laws Committee, presided over by the then Law Member of the Government of India, Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, and which included the then Home Member, Sir William Vincent, unanimously recommended to the Government of India that the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 should be limited to its original purpose, and that except on the inflammable frontier it should not be put into operation against British subjects; that this recommendation was accepted by the Government of India in their Home Department Resolution No. 714, dated 1921, in which it was recorded that the Governor-General in Council had considered the Report and had decided to accept the recommendations made by the Committee; and that Sir Malcolm Hailey, Home Member, admitted that the Government of India had announced their intention of accepting these recommendations, he is prepared to see that these recommendations are carried out?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Committee's recommendation for the repeal of the Regulation was qualified by the recognition that grave emergencies might arise in which the Government would require a "weapon" of this nature and would have to ask the Legislature to provide it. The Government of India's announcement was that "steps will be taken as soon as may be to introduce legislation" to give effect to the Committee's recommendation. The details of this legislation involved references to the Secretary of State. Several other laws were, in fact, repealed. But before the provisions of the Bill to repeal Regulation III of 1818 were settled the Government of India decided that, in view of political conditions in India, the time was not suitable

for carrying through the repeal. In August, 1922, and again in May, 1923, they informed the Secretary of State that this was the case, and that before proceeding with the legislation they would again refer to him and obtain his assent. The recrudescence of political murder plots in Bengal has necessitated the recent use of the Regulation. The Secretaries of State in the two preceding Governments were in agreement with the decision of the Government of India, and my Noble Friend is not disposed to press the Government of India in existing conditions in that country to take up immediately the question of alternative legislation.

BUDGET.

Sir F. WISE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if the Indian Budget balances for 1923-24?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes, Sir. A small deficit of Rs. 38 lakhs is at present anticipated on the ordinary revenue and expenditure account. But as special receipts, aggregating Rs. 244 lakhs, will be credited to revenue in the current year, an eventual surplus of about Rs. 2 crores is expected.

SALT TAX.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can state what communication has been made by the Secretary of State to the Government of India with reference to the speech of the Secretary of State on the subject of the salt tax in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: No, Sir. My Noble Friend sees no reason to depart from the long-established and well-recognised practice under which communications to and from the Government of India are treated as confidential.

RAILWAYS.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering the objections raised by the president of the railway conference and the six principal chambers of commerce in India to the State management of the East Indian and Great Indian Peninsula Railways, he can state what decision the Government of India have come to on the subject?

Mr. RICHARDS: It has been decided that the East Indian and the Great Indian

Peninsula Railways shall on the 1st January and 1st July, 1925, respectively, be placed under State management, at any rate, temporarily. This does not preclude the possibility of the subsequent transfer of the management of one of the railways to an Indian company.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the question of raising the standard required for entrance to a university college in India is still under consideration; and whether any progress has been made in bringing colleges in India up to the level of colleges in other countries in this respect?

Mr. RICHARDS: If I may assume that the hon. and gallant Member refers to the proposal that admission to the regular degree courses in university colleges should be limited to students who have already passed the intermediate examination, the answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The principle of the change has been accepted in the Acts establishing the universities of Lucknow, Dacca and Aligarh and reconstituting that of Allahabad, and complementary action has been taken to place intermediate along with secondary education under a special authority separate from the university. Local governments, with whom the responsibility rests, are alive to the importance of the matter, but financial difficulties have made it impossible to give full effect to the scheme which would involve the establishment of a large number of separate intermediate colleges. It is impossible within the limits of an answer to give details of the progress made, but I hope shortly to be in a position to present to Parliament the Eighth Quinquennial Review of education in India, which contains full information on the subject.

Tuesday, 11th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

LASCAR CREWS.

11. **Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY** asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been

[Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy.] called to the fact that the following vessels sailing from Hull to the East have carried coolie crews from February, 1922, namely, the steamships "Hindoo," "Othello," "Ariosto," "Urbino," and "Lepanto," although prior to this date they carried white men, who were largely recruited from Hull resident seamen; whether he is aware that the engagement of the men deprives many Hull seamen of employment; what is the attitude of the Board of Trade in this matter; and whether any steps can be taken to restrict the employment of Asiatic crews to vessels trading east of Suez only?

Mr. WEBB: Four of the five vessels named in the question are trading regularly between India and this country, and, like other vessels employed in this trade, carry lascar crews. The employment of lascars on these particular ships commenced at various dates in 1921 and 1922. The fifth vessel is trading between India and the United States, and has an Asiatic crew not wholly composed of natives of India. There is nothing unusual or irregular in this method of manning vessels trading to India. The suggestion contained in the last part of the question would require legislation which would be controversial, and certainly could not be undertaken this Session, but the point will be borne in mind.

Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that careful steps are taken to prevent aliens coming in here to take the work on shore? Why should only the seamen be penalised in this matter?

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Are those men or are they not citizens of the British Empire?

Mr. WEBB: I was going to reply that the term "lascar" is accurately used to men who are natives of British India; consequently they would, in that sense, be citizens of the British Empire. The term is, I am afraid, somewhat loosely used; but the men on these ships are citizens of India.

Mr. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the wages paid to these men are not commensurate with good citizenship at all?

Mr. WEBB: That is a question that can hardly be dealt with by the Government. I think the hon. Member will realise that that is a matter for the trade unions and the employers.

Mr. B. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman has given us a definition of the word "lascar." Will he explain the meaning of "Dago"?

CAVALRY UNITS.

70. Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Secretary of State for War whether an agreement has yet been reached with the Government of India over the question of the number of British cavalry units in India?

Mr. WALSH: The answer is in the affirmative. The agreed number of regiments in India is six.

Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY: Where are these superfluous regiments to be transferred?

Mr. WALSH: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman will put the question down I will give him the information.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That this House do now adjourn."—
[*Mr. F. Hall.*]

Mr. LANSBURY: I do not apologise to the House, except to those Members who are very tired, for bringing forward the questions that I propose to bring forward during the period that is allowed to Members at this stage. They are all in connection with India, and I would like to point out that the people of India consist of some 300,000,000 persons, who are more or less under the charge of this House. At any rate this House is responsible in the last resort for the administration of affairs in that great country. There are three matters to which I wish to call the attention of the Under-Secretary of State for India, and each of them arises out of the answers given to questions yesterday. One concerns the disturbances at Jaito, another is in connection with the Bombay strike, and the last is the refusal to alter the decision that no round table conference shall be held between those representing the British Government and the nationalists of India.

I would like to say to my hon. Friends on these benches that we have a particular responsibility to our Indian fellow subjects in the matter of trade unionism, and also in the matter of freedom of speech, freedom of procession, and so on. We have welcomed Indians over here to the Trade Union Congress and to the national Labour party conferences, and again and again we have pledged them our support, not to independence apart from the British Empire or Dominions, but as a free partner with ourselves in a federation of free people. It seems to me that with a Labour Government in office we have a bigger responsibility than if we were sitting on the other side of the House. I am not one of those who think that everything can be done in a moment, or in six or seven weeks, but it seems to me that the new spirit that the Labour Government is supposed to represent should express itself in its relationship with the people of India.

A few weeks ago a disturbance took place in connection, I am told, with some religious observances, and some people in this country, and, I dare say, in this House, will think it is impossible in a country like India to keep the various sects at peace with one another. I would remind all self-righteous Christians on this subject that there is such a place as Belfast in the North of Ireland, and that in other parts of Ireland, and in our own country, very often in Liverpool and other parts, there are religious disturbances, and that it is not only in India where religious bigotry and intolerance are to be found. In the case that I want to bring to the notice of the House, the disturbances took place, the Under-Secretary told me yesterday, because the people who had gathered together to perform a religious observance carried arms. As a result, 21 of them were killed, 33 were wounded, and, I believe, 700 of them are in prison at the present moment. But the extraordinary thing is that we are told there were great crowds of people, and the police were hemmed in, but not a single policeman or soldier was injured. The Under-Secretary himself, in his answer yesterday, told me that nobody on our side was injured at all, and yet there were 21 people killed, and 33 wounded. The whole benefit of the

Montagu-Chelmsford reforms was vitiated by the Amritsar massacre, and because of the failure of the Home Government to take proper measures in dealing with those responsible. I hold in my hand a telegram, of which, I am told by an hon. Member who is an authority on India, I ought not to take any notice, but I am going to read part of it to the House, because I feel that it does explain to some extent why no one was injured on the side of the authorities, and these people, who were supposed to be violent and taking violent action against the authorities, were killed. The telegram has come to me from Mr. D. Chaman Lall, Secretary of the Indian Trade Union Congress. I am sure we on these benches must be very glad to know that they have advanced so far in India that they have a trade union congress now. He is also a member of the Legislative Assembly. I hope the Labour Government will help the trade union cause in India to the very utmost extent. But this is what he says:

“The Jatha was pledged to non-violence. Not a single individual belonging to the Jatha or any follower carried any firearms. The false report in this connection originated from the fact that the procession of Alkalis was accompanied by exhibition fireworks, as is the case with all such processions. The noise of the fireworks was construed by the authorities to have been rifle or gun fire. Although the crowd and the Jatha was absolutely unarmed, yet a senseless butchery of innocent men and spectators took place, and the Secretary of State was furnished with false information. Further, the Government never alleged that a single firearm was captured from the Jatha or the crowd, conclusively proving the falsity of the information furnished.”

If a great crowd carry firearms, surely the authorities would be able to pick up some of them, especially when they took 700 people prisoners and managed to kill the number I have stated. In that connection I want to ask the Under-Secretary to ask the Secretary of State to request the Viceroy to order a full and impartial inquiry into this matter, so as to get it out of the minds of Indians that the life of an Indian, especially an Indian agitator, is very cheap. I think you must establish somehow in the mind of the Indian a feeling that at least the British Parliament do value the life even of the poorest Indian.

[Mr. Lansbury.]

Coming to the Bombay strikes, we on these benches know, and so do hon. and right hon. Gentlemen everywhere know, that when there is a strike or lock-out—and I understand this is a lock-out—when men are hungry, and when there is to be an attempt to get the men back by the employers offering some inducement, there are nearly always crowds doing mass picketing. My information is that mass picketing was taking place in exactly the same manner that it would in this country in order to induce the men not to go back to work. It is said the police were stoned, and that there was an enormous number of men. There were 150,000 on strike or lock-out. It is said they hemmed the police in, and yet that tremendous mass of people stone-throwing only injured one policeman. That was the answer of the Under-Secretary yesterday. No one knows who were injured or who got away. It seems to me that there is not the slightest evidence of much stone-throwing or that police or soldiers were in any danger, but it does prove that, as in the case of the other disturbances, the authorities were not eager but quite ready to fire on unarmed people. There is no question of anyone being armed there. It is a question of stone-throwing, and we reply to that by shooting them down. The Under-Secretary yesterday could not tell me what was the cause of the strike, but I should think that, especially Lancashire Members here, who depend very largely for their business on India, would want a full inquiry as to the cause that drives 150,000 men to throw up their work. I am told from trade union sources that the men were being expected to live on a 40 per cent. reduction in wages, that the bonus so-called was a grant-in-aid of their wages to make up for depreciation in currency. Whether this was so or not, we want to know what are the bad conditions of labour that drive 150,000 men out into the streets and keeps them there—because this has been going on for weeks. I think we are entitled to ask the Under-Secretary to give the House full particulars. I repeat again, in this connection, that we ought to insist on a full and impartial inquiry into the firing on crowds. That seems to be quite the usual thing. I know that there are some

people who think that the proper way to keep crowds in order is to overawe them. That is the wrong way. The right way to deal with any people who have grievances is to remove the grievances. There ought to be some effort made to get this dispute settled on decent terms.

The last point is that these people of whom I am talking are really and literally starving. I would call the attention of everybody in this House to the fact that the "Times of India," which is not a Nationalist or Socialistic journal, but a sober organ of sober opinion — [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"] Yes. I am using your own language. This journal has put it on record that the people are definitely starving to-day in connection with this dispute. This is a matter for the House to consider, as to whether that condition of things ought to remain or whether the Secretary of State ought not to cable out at once, and for this reason—that the "Times of India" says, what our newspapers very often say, that because the men are locked out, or because they are on strike, the Government cannot do anything for them. In this country we would not allow people to starve to death under any circumstances, and I do not think that we ought to do it in India. Why I am so expressive in this matter is because friends who have come back from India—who are going backwards and forwards—some have arrived within the last few weeks—are impressing upon everybody they come in contact with that the situation in India is very grave, and that unless something is done, and that quickly, we shall probably have the sort of upheaval that we had at the Mutiny.

It happens that Mr. Sastri, one of the most moderate men that I have ever met from India, has also not only written, but telegraphed to me that the appeal of the Indian Legislative Assembly for a round-table conference between some of the representatives of the British Council should be acceded to for the reasons I have given. I heard somebody laugh just now! But I sat up in that Gallery and heard many Members laugh when Mr. Gladstone said that "the sands were running out" in connection with Ireland. Many Members who laugh to-day know how true were Mr. Gladstone's words, and know what a bitter

running out it meant. Justice was not done while there was yet time. It is because I feel that India is in the same position that I am raising this question here to-night. I am not one of those who want to spread what is called self-determination for every nation. We have sent Europe to the devil in following that policy. I believe in the unification of the nations, one with another. I believe in each nation finding its own self-expression in the community of other nations, and the Indian people are willing to join with us in building up civilisation, but you must treat them as equal partners. You cannot go on treating them as a dependent nation. My point is that on Monday the Budget was refused in the Legislative Assembly, and an Indian said to me:

“Your people may shoot us down and bring machine guns and aeroplanes. They can run their machine guns through the streets, but they cannot kill us because they can never kill our spirits.”

They have recognised and had a discussion with the leader of the Nationalist party, and they have made their protest hoping that the people of Britain will respond to it, because they want to remain constitutionally part of the British Dominions. They ask us to meet them around a table to discuss how we can give them a little more self-government. I want the Government to change their disposition, and to meet these people in order that peace may be preserved in India, and that India may in that way become a real gem in the Dominions of this great Empire.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): In the very few minutes at my disposal, the House will not expect me to cover the whole of the ground covered by my hon. Friend. I cannot help recalling the words of Macaulay, that an injustice, whether done in this country or in India, is the same. Here the case is exactly the same, and no one rejoices more than myself in that spirit. I sympathise entirely with what he said regarding the attitude of the Government towards the very difficult question of the government of India. I am sure the Government is full of sympathy with the ultimate ideal placed before this House by successive Governments for the last 40 years, that eventually it is the intention of this

country to give full and complete self-government to what we hope will be the great Dominion of India.

To come to some of the points referred to by my hon. Friend, he mentioned, in the first place, the Bombay strike. I am able to add a little to the information which I was able to give to the House yesterday. I am quoting not from any telegram that the Government has received from the Government of India, but I am quoting the words of the leader of the strike. He is a man named Joseph Baptista. He was in this case a voice crying in the wilderness, because the men have struck against his advice. The strike really arose over the question of the mill-owners declining to consent to a bonus to the operatives this year. They gave notice apparently that this year they would discontinue the bonus which had been paid for the last three years. That meant a reduction in wages of something like 8·3 per cent. These are figures given by Baptista himself, and his argument against a strike was this: He pointed out to the men that these mill-owners are manufacturers and merchants, and not philanthropists, and that clearly it was not the right time to strike.

Against the opinion of their leader, however, the strike began, apparently at one mill, on 17th January, when 2,500 men came out on strike. The result was, as has been already mentioned, that the mill-owners decided to close the rest of the mills for a certain period, and by 28th January 73 of the 76 mills in Bombay were closed and, as I said yesterday, 150,000 people were thrown out of employment. The Governor of Bombay immediately prepared to nominate a committee to arbitrate, and this position was brought to the notice of the men. I ought to say that at first the millowners were unwilling, but by the end of February apparently they were willing to arbitrate. By that time, however, there had been some change in the position, and the riot, of which I gave a full account yesterday, was the direct result of an offer on the part of some of the men to go back without any conditions at all. I am sorry that I cannot add anything to the details I gave yesterday, because, by reading a telegram, I then put the House in possession of all the information that we have at the moment.

[Mr. Richards.]

To turn to the other regrettable incident, the firing at Jaito, this is really a very intricate and a very difficult situation, a combination, that is to say, of religious fanaticism and political intrigue. We all know and have cause to respect the Sikhs because of their intense loyalty for a great number of years to this country, and the Sikhs are certainly one of the proudest nations which are associated with our great Empire. It is difficult from the little experience I have had, as far as I can see, to distinguish exactly between their religion and that of the Hindoos generally, but they emphasise certain points, and they are particularly prone perhaps to carry these points to extremes. During the last 20 or 30 years the spirit of religion in the Sikh community has seriously declined, and about 1920 there was an honest attempt made to recover the position and to revive the Sikh religion once again. During that period, when religion had fallen behind-hand rather among the Sikhs, it so happened that the sacred places had become the property of other people of whom they disapproved, and one thing that they determined upon was to recover these sacred shrines once again. That meant, of course, coming into conflict with the people who were in possession of the shrines at the time.

The real difficulty of the Government of India, as far as I understand it, is to keep the peace between these two antagonistic elements among the Sikhs themselves. It is an exceedingly difficult position for a foreign Government to try and keep the peace between two wrangling religious bodies. The Government has attempted again and again to get an agreement between them by setting up a board which would in some way adjust the differences, but hitherto without success. The result of that was the passing of the Shrines Act, as it is called, in 1922, setting up a board consisting of the two sections of the Sikh community in order to deal with this particular question, but that has not been operative.

It being Half-past Eleven of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House, without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Wednesday, 12th March, 1924.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Indian Affairs.—The Lords communicate that they have come to the following Resolution, namely: "That it is desirable that a Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to examine and report on any Bill or matter referred to them specifically by either House of Parliament, and to consider, with a view to reporting, if necessary, thereon any matter relating to Indian Affairs brought to the notice of the Committee by the Secretary of State for India."

Thursday, 13th March, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

OPIUM TRAFFIC.

Lieut.-Colonel FREMANTLE asked the Home Secretary the present position as to the regulation of the international opium traffic and restriction of production?

Mr. HENDERSON: The hon. and gallant Member will be aware that the general supervision of the traffic is entrusted to the League of Nations, so far as its members are concerned, subject to the provisions of the International Conventions in force, and that the League has appointed an Advisory Committee to deal with the subject. The proceedings of this Committee, and the action taken by the League and the several Governments on its recommendations will be found in the official publications of the League. As a result of the preparatory work done by the Committee, it was decided at the assembly of the League last September to call two International Conferences this year to consider the Far Eastern situation, and the question of the restriction of production respectively. If there is any particular point on which the hon. and gallant Member desires information, perhaps he will put down another question.

SUPPLY.**ARMY ESTIMATES, 1924-25.**

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: The question of a supply of officers depends on a great many things, and I am glad the Financial Secretary is here, because in his charge is the payment of the officers of the Army. One important point I would bring to his notice is that the married allowance given to the officers in this country is not paid to officers when they are sent abroad to India. That must be altered if we are to get the supply of officers we need. It is not fair to send a man off to India and put him on less pay. I brought the question to the notice of the Secretary of State for India the other day, and I gave him particulars to show, that the married captain gets £22 less a year in India than at home, and the married subaltern of reserve seven years' service loses £68. The quartermasters lose in every grade and the married warrant officers and non-commissioned officers and the men lose respectively £48, £20 and £16 a year each. I ask, is it fair to send men to serve abroad when they lose this pay? I do not ask that the married allowance may be given and arrangements made with the India Office that a marriage allowance should be given to the officers and men there on the same scale as at home.

Similar cases arose with the air forces. I put a question to the Air Minister, and he had to acknowledge to me that the married flight lieutenant, who gets £68 in Egypt, goes down to £59 in India. Is that fair? I bring these things to the hon. Member's notice because we cannot expect service in the Army to be popular when men are subject to this great loss of pay. Finally, I would draw attention to another matter—the statement on page 12 of the Estimates regarding the strength of the British troops in India. The Memorandum states that one of the cavalry regiments, not required in India, is to be sent to Palestine. Why “not required”? The whole of our British troops in India—I am not talking of the men—has been reduced to 57,000. The whole strength is 57,000 men. India is just the same size as Europe without Russia. It has far more dif-

ferent countries and races than the continent of Europe, and could we go 57,000 rule the Continent of Europe with 57,000 men? The whole thing is impossible. I would ask the Financial Secretary to tell me—for there is no one else here to tell me—what is the proportion of native to British troops now, and how does it compare with what it used to be. I believe that the native troops in India will be really loyal to England, but what we have to have in mind is possible revolution and rebellion. What have we seen in the papers during the last few days? Note the telegrams from India in the last day or two. I read in a telegram from Delhi that Mr. Patel in the Legislative Assembly—

“frankly admitted that their plan was to make the Government govern by certification, and that the Swarajists' next step would be mass agitation, followed by civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes.”

Then there was a speech by another man, Pandit Malaviya, who, criticising the military expenditure, demanded the disbandment of the British troops maintained for internal security. When we have that going on is it safe to reduce the army in India to 57,000 men? We may have mass agitation and civil disobedience and any sort of revolution at any time. Could you now send one division out to India if a rebellion arose in three weeks? That is the point we have to consider. I honestly say I am bringing this to the notice of the hon. Member, for it seems to me that our defence forces are far below the margin of safety at the present time. I do trust that this question may be taken into consideration. I have only mentioned these few cases; but these points I do put before the Financial Secretary. I trust he will take them into consideration, and that he will be able to give me some satisfactory answer.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Melton (Sir C. Yate) drew attention to the strength of the Army in India. That has been reduced in the present year from 71,109 to 61,964. Has that reduction been made with the full consent of the Commander-in-Chief in India? The Secretary of State for War, in answer to a question I put to him the other day, said the British cavalry in India had been reduced from nine regiments to six.

[Lieut.-Colonel Howard-Bury.]

What has happened to those six? So far as I can make out from the Army Estimates, two regiments have come home and one has gone to Palestine. Is that one in Palestine going to remain there permanently as a garrison, are barracks to be built there for them, and on whom does the charge of those three regiments which have been brought from India fall at the present time? They used to belong to, and were on the strength and in the pay of, the Indian Government. I fully realise the Army accounted for nearly one half of that Budget, and that they were very anxious to get rid of a certain number of troops, but have they thrown, at the present time, the whole of the expense on to the War Office Estimates? Besides that, the artillery in India has been reduced by over 1,000. Does that mean each battery has been reduced by a few men, or that a whole brigade of artillery has been brought over? The infantry in India has been reduced by 5,500 British troops. Are they battalions which have been brought home, or a few men from each battalion? Then the signal corps has been reduced by 1,000. Can the hon. and gallant Gentleman give us an explanation as to whether the whole of the charge has been thrown on the War Office Estimates, and whether it has been done with the full consent of the Commander-in-Chief in India?

Major ATTLEE: Points have also been raised with regard to certain cavalry reductions in India. One of these regiments is now in this country, one in Palestine and the other is in India.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is that regiment in Palestine to be withdrawn?

Major ATTLEE: I could not say. It will depend on our commitments there.

Monday, 17th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SALT TAX.

1. **Sir HENRY CRAIK** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether there is any evidence in his

possession indicating that serious hardship has been caused by the operation of the Salt Tax, or that it has led to agitation on the part of any large section of the population?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): All taxation, I suppose, involves hardship in some degree. But my right hon. Friend knows that in the case of the Indian Salt Tax it is difficult to distinguish between economic and political considerations.

Sir H. CRAIK: Has the hon. Gentleman any evidence that serious hardship was caused by this tax; and can he say whether the agitation came from any large body of opinion?

Mr. LANSBURY: Before the hon. Member answers that question, may I ask whether he is aware of the fact that the Legislative Assembly rejected this tax the day before yesterday?

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether this was an agitation confined only to politicians?

MALABAR OPERATIONS (GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL).

2. **Major YERBURGH** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any decision has been arrived at relative to the grant of the Indian General Service Medal to the 2nd battalion of the Dorset Regiment and to other troops who took part in the Malabar operations?

Mr. RICHARDS: His Majesty the King has approved the grant of the Indian General Service Medal with clasp, Malabar, 1921-22, to the military forces who took part in the Malabar operations.

FINANCIAL MEASURES.

3. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what steps the Government of India proposes to take in the Central Provinces where the Central Provinces Council have totally rejected the Budget Vote; and what steps do they propose to take in view of the Legislative Assembly's refusal at Delhi to sanction the Customs establishment, the Income Tax grant, the salt grant, and the opium grant?

Mr. RICHARDS: As regards part one of the question, the Governor of the

Central Provinces has taken action, under Section 72D of the Government of India Act, to restore all the Budget expenditure that, in his opinion, falls within his powers under that Section. As the Governor has been advised that he has no power to restore the salaries of Ministers, both Ministers have resigned. The Governor will now assume charge of their portfolios under the Transferred Subjects (Temporary Administration) Rules. As regards part two, I am afraid I cannot attempt to anticipate any decision which may have to be taken when all the demands for grants have been dealt with in the Assembly. The hon. and gallant Member will no doubt recognise that the natural place for the announcement of the decision will be the Legislative Assembly itself.

Mr. WARDLAW - MILNE: May the House take it that the Government will support strongly the Viceroy in any measures which he may take?

AFGHANISTAN (ARMAMENTS).

6. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any information about a consignment of machine guns, rifles, and ammunition for the Amir of Afghanistan that has been held up in Bombay; what country has been furnishing these arms; whether this conflicts with any condition agreed to by members of the League of Nations; and under what authority and for what reasons have these consignments been detained?

Mr. RICHARDS: A consignment of munitions, purchased by the Afghan Government from a French firm, has been detained at Bombay since October last, His Majesty's Government having decided, in accordance with the terms of Article VI of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty and letter No. 1 thereto attached, to withhold for the present permission for transit. A completely satisfactory settlement of the questions that gave cause for this decision has, unfortunately, not yet been attained, but it is hoped that it may be possible to release the arms at an early date. The answer to the third part of the question is in the negative.

ANGLO-INDIANS.

7. Mr. HOPE SIMPSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Government

of India has reduced the grants made to the Kalimpong Homes and other educational institutions for Anglo-Indians in India; and what are the reasons for these reductions?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend the Secretary of State has received no official information on the subject, but he is making inquiries.

8. Mr. SIMPSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that large numbers of Anglo-Indians have been dismissed from employment on Indian railways during the last 18 months; if so, what are the reasons for this action; whether he is aware that many Anglo-Indian ex-railway servants are now unemployed in Calcutta; what steps are being taken to relieve that unemployment; whether any application has been made to the Government of India for grants of land for settlement of Anglo-Indians; and what is the policy of that Government in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand that, owing to the need for retrenchment on the Indian railways, reductions of staff have been made, involving, no doubt, the discharge of Anglo-Indians as well as of others. I also learn from the Press that an influential committee of European business men and officials has issued an appeal for funds for relieving distress among Anglo-Indians in Calcutta. An Anglo-Indian colonisation scheme to the Andamans has also recently been initiated as a private enterprise. The Chief Commissioner has done all in his power to encourage it.

Mr. SIMPSON: May we take it that these Anglo-Indians are not being dismissed in order to make places for pure Indians, in view of the fact that the Anglo-Indians are born and bred in the country?

Mr. RICHARDS: As a matter of fact, more Indians than Anglo-Indians have been dismissed.

BOMBAY MILLS (WAGES DISPUTE).

9. Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can state the wages paid to adult men and women workers in the Bombay cotton mills during the 12 months preceding August, 1914, and the year ending 31st December, 1923, and the wages proposed

[Mr. Lansbury.]

to be paid to the same class of workers during the current year; and will he state the difference in the cost of living and the depreciation in value of the rupee as between the year ending August, 1914, and the present time?

Mr. RICHARDS: With the hon. Member's permission, I will circulate the reply in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the reply:

Figures answering exactly to the periods referred to in my hon. Friend's question are not available. The director of the Bombay Labour Office conducted an inquiry into the comparative pre-War and post-War earnings of the mill workers which showed that, in Bombay (City and Island), the monthly earnings per head of men were, in round figures, 35 rupees in May, 1921, as against 18 rupees in May, 1914 (percentage increase of 90 per cent.), and of women 17 rupees as against 10 rupees in May, 1924 (increase of 73 per cent.): these figures exclude overtime pay, annual bonus, remuneration in the form of food or clothing below market price and cheap housing, where this obtains. As regards the difference in the cost of living (which is, of course, an indication of the change in the purchasing power of the rupee), the Bombay Labour Office reports the average percentage increase in the cost of living of the working classes in Bombay over July, 1914, to be 58 per cent. in January, 1924. The percentage increase is subject to seasonal variations; the figure for July, 1923, was 53 per cent.

10. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the lock-out of Bombay cotton operatives is ended; if not, what steps the authorities are taking to bring about a settlement; what number of these operatives have left Bombay and how many have died of starvation; and is the Government or municipality doing anything to relieve distress caused by the lock-out?

Mr. RICHARDS: The mills were reopened on 18th February, but the strikers did not resume work. I understand that on the initiative of the Government of Bombay a special committee of inquiry into the dispute was set up. I have no official information as to the number of operatives leaving Bombay and none as to any deaths from starvation. My noble

Friend has telegraphed to the Government of India for further information as to the course of the dispute, and is also inquiring as to the measures taken to relieve the distress caused by the strike. Steps to pay the wages due for January are in progress.

11. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India who are the owners of the Bombay cotton mills from which the workers have been locked out; how much British capital, if any, is invested in those mills, and are any persons of British origin shareholders, directors, or managers of those mills; and whether trade unions are recognised as legal organisations by the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not the material for a reply to the first two parts of the question. As already stated, the mills were reopened on 18th February. As regards the last part of the question, the Government of India have accepted the principle of freedom of association and are contemplating legislation for the recognition and protection of trade unions.

Mr. LANSBURY: Will the hon. Gentleman get the information for which I asked in the early part of the question?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that 80 per cent. of the mills affected are owned by natives and that the other 20 per cent. are managed by natives?

Mr. RICHARDS: We have not that information.

Captain Viscount CURZON: Is it a fact that the brother of the late hon. Member for North Battersea, Mr. Saklatvala, is largely interested?

INDIAN SUBJECTS (COLONIES AND PROTECTORATES).

77. **Mr. ORMSBY-GORE** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies when the committee appointed by the Government of India to confer with him on questions concerning Indians in Colonies and Protectorates will meet; and what are the exact terms of reference of this committee?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have been asked to reply to this question. The committee

will meet in London about the beginning of next month. The terms of reference so far issued are to make representations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on all questions affecting Indians domiciled in Kenya arising out of the decisions embodied in the White Paper (Cmd. 1922) and on certain pending questions affecting Indians in Fiji. I should like to take this opportunity of stating that my hon. Friend the Member for Taunton (Mr. Hope Simpson) has agreed to act as chairman of the committee.

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: How is it that the terms of reference to the committee have been narrowed to Kenya and Fiji, when the whole object of the committee was to examine how Indians were treated throughout the Colonial Empire?

Captain BERKELEY: Will this committee take into consideration the question of the resumption of Indian emigration to the Colonies for the purposes of labour?

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: And particularly British Guiana?

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS.

Mr. REMER: I rise to a point of Order, with reference to a private notice Question I gave to you, Sir, in regard to German competition for the Indian State railways, which, I understand, you have disallowed on the ground that the Home Government are not responsible. I beg to submit to you, Sir, that they have responsibility owing to the Treaty of Versailles giving them power to deal with this German competition, and, in view of the urgency of the matter—the contract, I understand, will be placed tomorrow morning—involving considerable loss of work to the unemployed people of this country, may I ask you whether, in these circumstances, you will allow the question to be put?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have considered it carefully, and it does not appear to me to be a subject for a special question in the House.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

MR. B. G. HORNIMAN: DEPORTATION.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, the War-

time regulation under which B. G. Horniman was deported from India; and whether, in view of the fact that this regulation has now lapsed, he will state the reasons why Mr. Horniman is still excluded from returning to India?

Mr. RICHARDS: Mr. B. G. Horniman was deported under Rule 3 (d) of the Defence of India (Consolidation) Rules, 1915. He is not allowed a passport to return because of the objections of the Government of Bombay and the Government of India. I would refer the hon. Member to the reply which I gave to a similar question on the 3rd March last.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the charge under which B. G. Horniman was deported from India five years ago; and whether Mr. Horniman was given an opportunity of replying to the charges then or since or whether the deportation was of a summary character?

Mr. RICHARDS: Mr. Horniman was informed in the Order for his deportation that the Government considered he had acted, was acting and was about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety and the defence of British India. As regards the second part of the question, Mr. Horniman was not called upon to answer any charge. The provisions of the Act under which he was deported did not require any such procedure.

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Ordered,

"That so much of the Lords Message [12th March] as communicates the Resolution, That it is desirable that a Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to examine and report on any Bill or matter referred to them specifically by either House of Parliament, and to consider, with a view to reporting, if necessary, thereon any matters relating to Indian Affairs brought to the notice of the Committee by the Secretary of State for India, be now considered."—[*Mr. Griffiths.*]

So much of the Lords Message considered accordingly.

Resolved, "That this House doth concur with the Lords in the said Resolution."—[*Mr. Griffiths.*]

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Wednesday, 19th March, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

MR. HORNIMAN: DEPORTATION.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Legislative Assembly of India, without a Division, has passed a resolution calling upon the Government to remove the prohibition forbidding Mr. B. G. Horniman to return to India; whether, under these circumstances, the Secretary of State for India will reconsider the matter and advise the Viceroy to allow Mr. Horniman to return; and whether, if the Secretary of State is unable to adopt this course, he will publish a White Paper setting out the reasons why Mr. Horniman was deported, and the reasons which prevent the Government of India from allowing him to return?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware of the resolution referred to in the question. The views of my Noble Friend were stated in the reply which I gave to the hon. and gallant Member for Central Hull (Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy) on the 3rd March. The reasons for the deportation and the continued exclusion of Mr. Horniman have repeatedly been stated in this House, and I can see no reason for further publication of them.

Thursday, 20th March, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

COTTON OPERATIVES STRIKE, BOMBAY.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any further information to give to the House as to the lock-out of cotton operatives in Bombay; whether the men are now back at work; what steps have been taken to relieve the distress caused by the dispute; and can he inform the House whether the wages due to the operatives for work done last January have been paid?

Mr. RICHARDS: My hon. Friend has no doubt seen a report in this morning's

"Times" that January wages are being paid, that relief measures are proceeding, and that the strike appears to be ending. My Noble Friend has not yet received confirmation of this report, but has no reason to suppose that it is not correct.

FINANCE BILL.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in the event of the Viceroy of India certifying the proposed taxes which were rejected by the legislative assembly, this House will have an opportunity of discussing the questions involved before the certification becomes operative?

Mr. RICHARDS: Section 67 B of the Government of India Act enables the Governor-General to bring an Act passed under the provisions of that Section into immediate operation, subject to disallowance by His Majesty in Council, when in his opinion a state of urgency exists which justifies such action. This procedure was followed in the case of the Finance Act last year. The Governor-General will, in due course, announce the procedure which he may decide to adopt this year.

TRADE UNIONS.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that 12 months ago the Government of India accepted the principle of freedom of association for workmen; and whether, in view of this fact, the Home Government will advise the Viceroy to take immediate steps for bringing about the legal recognition of trade unions?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply to his question referring to this subject on 17th March. My Noble Friend hopes to receive shortly the proposals of the Government of India.

Monday, 24th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BOMBAY MILLS (WAGES' DISPUTE).

1. **Mr. THOMAS WILLIAMS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether steps have been taken to alter

the law in India which enables employers to withhold six weeks' wages from employes; and can he state how many deaths have been registered through starvation during the recent lock-out in Bombay?

UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The payment of wages in India is not regulated by law. In the Bombay mills it is customary to pay wages in the middle of the month following that in which they are earned, but, owing to the present disturbances, there was some delay in the payment of January wages. The amounts due have now, I understand, been disbursed. The Bombay Government, who have organised relief measures, report that they have not heard of any deaths from starvation among the mill hands or their dependants.

Mr. WILLIAMS: Is the hon. Gentleman not aware that the wages were actually held back, because the men refused to work at the 1914 wages, and will he not say that the Government have a grave responsibility while these things are actually taking place?

Captain Viscount CURZON: Is it not a fact that the President of the millowners at Bombay is by name Saklatvala?

Mr. KIRKWOOD: What has that got to do with the question?

Mr. RICHARDS: In reply to the first supplementary question, it is not the fact that the employes were asked to work at the 1914 wages. I should say, however, that it is very regrettable that the wages should have been held back in the way they were.

2. Mr. WILLIAMS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware that Bombay workers have been locked out because they refuse to accept wages on the 1914 basis; and that employers have withheld six weeks' wages with the result that deaths have been registered through starvation; and will he assure the House that his Department has taken all available steps to bring the responsible employers to justice and to prevent any recurrence of these actions?

Mr. RICHARDS: The cause of the dispute was the decision of the millowners that the results of 1923 did not justify the payment of a bonus. This question was referred by the Government of Bombay to a Committee composed of the Chief

Justice of Bombay and two independent gentlemen which reported unanimously in favour of the millowners. No proposal was made to reduce wages which, as explained in a reply given to the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury), on the 17th March, are substantially higher than those paid in 1914. As regards the second part of the question, I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply given to-day to his previous question.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is it not the case that these questions give a totally wrong impression of the state of affairs in Bombay?

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: Is it the case that any deaths have occurred through starvation?

Mr. RICHARDS: I replied to that in the first answer—no.

Mr. PURCELL: Will the Under-Secretary consider the advisability of the appointment of a representative committee to go into the whole question of industrial relationships in India, and with a view of considering the relationships at the present time?

FINANCE BILL.

3. Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the complete rejection of the whole of the Finance Bill by the Indian Legislative Assembly, the Governor-General in Council will now take steps for the complete restoration of the rejected grants?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Governor-General in Council has restored the demands under the heads Customs, Taxes on Income, Opium and Salt, but has accepted other reductions made by the Legislative Assembly, namely, Rs.25 lakhs under Railways and Rs.100 under Forests.

10. Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can make any statement as to the position of affairs arising out of the recent defeat of the Government of India in the Legislative Assembly over the Finance Bill, and of the intention of the Viceroy to certify the legislation required to carry on the Administration?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Legislative Assembly having refused on the 17th

[Mr. Richards.] instant by a majority vote to take the Finance Bill into consideration; motion for leave to introduce the Bill as recommended by the Governor-General, in accordance with the provisions of Section 67B of the Government of India Act, was made in the Assembly on the 18th instant. The rate for the Salt Tax proposed in the recommended Bill was Rs.1½d. per maund, the rate in force before the enhancement last year. The Assembly refused leave to introduce the Bill, which is now to be considered by the Council of State, where, I understand, the discussion is fixed for to-day.

AKALIS (PUNJAB).

4. **Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Gurdwara Committee are proposing to send two more jathas of 500 Akalis each to Nabha; and, in view of the political and provocative nature of these processions, can he see his way to prevent the starting of these processions which are bound to cause further disturbances?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have been informed officially that another jatha of 1,000 is being sent, and that the question of possible measures to prevent further jathas has been under the consideration of the Governments in India. I think it is important also to lay stress on the fact that the arrival of the second large jatha at Nabha did not cause a disturbance. It was disposed of peaceably.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that each of these jathas follows a different route, and that the object of the jathas is to inflame the countryside along these routes?

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is it not a fact that when the hon. Gentleman describes these jathas as having been disposed of peaceably, he really means they have been peaceably passed into police cells?

IMPERIAL BANK OF INDIA.

5. **Sir FREDRIC WISE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of branch offices opened by the Imperial Bank of India since the agreement with the Government of India came into force; and who determines the location of the branches?

Mr. RICHARDS: Sixty-five, according to information that has reached me recently. The agreement with the Imperial Bank provides that of the one hundred branches to be opened within five years from the date of the agreement, the Government of India should be entitled to determine the location of one in every four, taking the same so far as feasible in the order of their opening.

Sir F. WISE: Who determines the balance?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Bank itself.

CONSTITUTION.

6. **Sir HENRY CRAIK** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can make any further statement with respect to the adherence of the Government to the provisions of the India Act of 1919, postponing for 10 years any alteration of the constitution thereby established?

Mr. RICHARDS: As I have already informed the House, His Majesty's Government adhere to the provisions of the Act of 1919, but I am doubtful whether those provisions will sustain the interpretation which the right hon. Gentleman seems to place upon them.

Sir H. CRAIK: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons—

Mr. KIRKWOOD: Speak up; we cannot hear a word you are saying.

Sir H. CRAIK: On a point of Order. I must ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether I am not entitled to some sort of courtesy?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must not interrupt discourteously.

Mr. KIRKWOOD: I have as good a right to ask them to speak up, as they have to ask us.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must not interrupt in a discourteous manner.

Sir H. CRAIK: May I ask whether the hon. Gentleman is aware that the Joint Committee, upon whose Report this House accepted the Bill of 1919, said with reference to this very Clause 41, that

"In their opinion the Statutory Committee—"

Mr. NEIL MACLEAN: On a point of Order. Is it in order to read anything during Questions?

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is reading a quotation from a Report of a Committee of this House.

Sir H. CRAIK (*reading*)—

"In their opinion the Statutory Committee should not be appointed until the expiration of 10 years, and that no change of substance in the constitution, whether in the franchise or in the list of reserved subjects, or otherwise, should be made in the interval"—

and whether the hon. Gentleman has had that in view in making his answer?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is so, but I would like to remind the right hon. Gentleman that one Parliament cannot bind its successors, and, if any fundamental change is made, of course, it would be made by Parliament.

Sir WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS: Do I understand by "one Parliament cannot bind its successors" that the Government has under consideration an alteration of what the last Parliament has done?

Mr. RICHARDS: No.

Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS: Then why say it?

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Will the hon. Gentleman say clearly what he means by a reconsideration? Has the opinion of the Government altered in any way from the answer he gave in this House on the 10th March?

AMBUSH OF PICKET (CHAGMALAI).

7. **Sir WILLIAM DAVISON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House any information as to the ambushing of a picket from the 3/9th Jats near Chagmalai, resulting in the death of one British officer and two Indian soldiers and in the wounding of six Indian soldiers; and whether he is satisfied that the troops in this district are adequate to meet the demands upon them and to prevent isolated and unsupported detachments from being cut off?

Mr. RICHARDS: No further details than those contained in the Press are available. Attempts of this nature are frequently being made by the unruly elements amongst the tribesmen of Waziristan. The fact that they are so rarely successful affords ample evidence of the adequacy of our troops in this

district, and of their efficiency in dealing with the situation.

Sir W. DAVISON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware of the great anxiety that is felt by the relatives of officers and men who are serving, and can he assure the House that the troops are adequate, and that isolated detachments will not be exposed to undue risks?

ROYAL ARMY TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION.

8. **Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Royal Army Temperance Association has been closed down in India; if so, what has become of its assets or, if this has not yet happened, is there such a project under consideration?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am informed that the Governing Council of the Royal Army Temperance Association in India have decided to terminate at the end of the present financial year the existence of the association, the usefulness of which has been much restricted by recent changes, and to hand over the balance of its funds to the Commander-in-Chief for the benefit of Soldiers' Furlough Homes in India.

Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS: Having regard to the important change announced, could the hon. Gentleman lay any Papers, and can he say what intention the Government have to provide for the question of temperance in the Army in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand that this action has been taken as a result of the Report of Lord Esher's Committee, and that provisions have been made in that respect in other ways by the Young Men's Christian Association.

OPIUM TRAFFIC.

9. **Mr. HANNON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the amount of opium shipped from India to Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements, respectively, in 1923; and what steps are being taken to prevent the smuggling of opium into China?

Mr. RICHARDS: The only opium shipped from India to these two Colonies is that indentured for by their respective Governments, which for 1923 amounted for Hong Kong to 240 and for the Straits Settlements to 2,100 chests of

[Mr. Richards.]

140 lbs. each. Moreover, all of it was covered by certificates from the Governments of the importing countries, in the form prescribed by the League of Nations to the effect that the opium was required for legitimate purposes and its importation approved. Opium so consigned to the Governments of these Colonies cannot be smuggled into China before it has reached the Colonies.

Mr. HANNON: What are the legitimate purposes embodied in the answer of the hon. Gentleman?

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

11 Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly against the advice of the Government, recommending the wholesale release of all political prisoners in India; and whether he can state what is the policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to these cases?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand the hon. and gallant Member to refer to the resolution reported in the Press as having been carried on Thursday last for the repeal of Bengal Regulation III of 1818, and other special laws. My Noble Friend has received no representation from the Government of India on the subject of the resolution, and has no reason to doubt that they will suitably deal with it in the exercise of their discretion.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: What do the Government mean by that? Can we not have some idea of what is the Government policy?

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

NAVY CLOTH SUPPLIES: DYES.

Mr. W. THORNE asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty if he is aware that the cloth supplied to the Navy used for the clothes of the officers and men is very inferior to that used in pre-War days; that the dye used to-day is not pure indigo; and that, in consequence of the

inferior dye used, it has a damaging effect on India by the fact of the indigo-plant growers putting their plants out of cultivation, which is causing unemployment and unrest in India; and if he is prepared to receive a deputation from the dyers about the matter?

Mr. AMMON: Officers obtain their uniforms from private sources. The standard of quality of cloth, serge, etc., purchased for the men is not inferior to that obtaining in pre-War days and the examination of deliveries is as strict. Ever since 1909, with few exceptions during the War period, the use of natural or synthetic dye has been optional, and I am not aware that the admission of synthetic dye has caused unrest in India. The Admiralty are quite prepared to consider any representations that the dyers wish to put forward.

POLICE UNIFORMS: DYES.

Mr. W. THORNE asked the Home Secretary if he is aware that the cloth supplied to the police used for the clothes of officers and men is very inferior to that used in pre-War days; that the dye used to-day is not pure indigo, and in consequence of inferior dye used it has a damaging effect on India by the fact of the indigo plant growers putting their plants out of cultivation, which is causing unemployment and unrest in India; and if he is prepared to receive a deputation from the dyers about the matter?

Mr. HENDERSON: So far as regards the cloth supplied for the Metropolitan Police, the answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. As regards the dye, the contracts provide for the use of indigo, though not necessarily natural indigo, and I am not aware that there has been any material change in quality in the last 10 or 15 years. I am not in possession of precise particulars of the contracts of the county and borough police authorities, but I believe that the materials used are now little, if any, inferior in quality to those used before the War. In these circumstances, I doubt whether it would serve any useful purpose for me to receive a deputation, but I shall be happy to consider any further information my hon. Friend may wish to bring to my notice.

Tuesday, 25th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

HOME-TRADE VESSELS (ASIATICS).

5. Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he can inform the House of the number of Asiatics at present employed on British home-trade vessels; and how many of these are British subjects?

Mr. WEBB: The answer is rather long, and the hon. and gallant Member will, perhaps, not object to my having it circulated in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Not in the least. Is the right hon. Gentleman taking any steps to prevent the employment in these British ships of non-British subjects, who are Asiatics?

Mr. WEBB: I ought to have notice of that question.

Following is the answer promised:

The latest available figures of the numbers of Asiatic seamen employed in British home-trade ships are those obtained in the last census of seamen, and relate to the 19th June, 1921. On that date, out of a total number of 18,495 seamen employed on ordinary agreements in the home and coasting trades, 260 were Asiatics, and of these, 211 were stated to belong to India or Aden and were, probably, British subjects. In addition, 1,017 Lascars, engaged on agreements opened, and to be closed, in Asia, were serving in vessels which, on the census day, were employed in the home or coasting trade.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BRITISH ARMY.

CLOTH SUPPLIES: DYES.

Mr. W. THORNE asked the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that the cloth supplied to the Army used for the officers and men is very inferior to that used in pre-War days; that the dye used to-day is not pure indigo and, in consequence of inferior dye used, has a damaging effect on India by the fact of the indigo plant growers putting their plants

out of cultivation, which is causing unemployment and unrest in India; and if he is prepared to receive a deputation from the dyers about the matter?

Mr. WALSH: The reply to the first two parts of the question is in the negative. Officers make their own purchases from military outfitters, but as regards the other ranks the blue cloth purchased since the War has been fully up to the pre-War standard in all respects, including dyeing. The indigo dye used contains 96 per cent. to 98 per cent. pure indigo, and the pre-War specification has not been varied.

POST OFFICE UNIFORMS: DYES.

Mr. W. THORNE asked the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the cloth supplied to the Post Office, used for the officers and men, is very inferior to that used in pre-War days, and that the dye used to-day is not pure indigo and, in consequence of inferior dye used, has a damaging effect on India by the fact of the indigo plant growers putting their plants out of cultivation which is causing unemployment and unrest in India; and if he is prepared to receive a deputation from the dyers about the matter?

Mr. HARTSHORN: Certain changes in Post Office uniform were made as a result of the recommendations of the Geddes Committee; but I am assured that the material now used is of good quality, and compares favourably with the material used for civilian clothing. It has not been the practice for many years past to require the use of natural indigo in the dye of Post Office uniforms; and I am informed that by doing so additional expenditure would be incurred with no corresponding advantage. In the circumstances I do not think a deputation would serve any useful purpose.

Thursday, 27th March, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

AIRSHIP SERVICE, INDIA.

54. Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether, in view of the inevitable delay in the commencement of an airship

[Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy.] service to India, he will state what steps are being taken to accelerate the mail service only to and from India over the whole or part of the air route by aeroplanes; and whether this is to be taken in hand by the Royal Air Force or by commercial companies?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for AIR (Mr. Leach): As I informed the hon. and gallant Member on the 20th March, research is being carried on with a view to developing types of aircraft and engines suitable for air mail work. The establishment of a heavier-than-air service to India, although desirable, would be a costly undertaking which at the present moment could not be justified, especially in view of possible airship developments. At present the second part of the question does not arise.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Does not the hon. Member know that there are many types of aircraft which habitually carry mails?—craft belonging to the Royal Air Force. Why should not they be put on this route?

Mr. LEACH: The whole matter is being investigated.

Brigadier-General SPEARS: Will the Under-Secretary take an early opportunity of making a statement concerning the offer made by the Daimler Company to co-operate in carrying the mails?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member had better put that question on the Paper.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Act, 1906; and for other purposes." [Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Bill [Lords].]

BOMBAY, BARODA, AND CENTRAL INDIA RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Read the First time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Monday, 31st March, 1924.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGES (ENTRANCE).

1. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what steps are being taken to raise the standard required for entrance to university colleges in India so as to restrict the number of university students to those whose abilities and equipment fitted them to profit by the courses of study laid down, to put a stop to the present system of cheap degrees and easy standards, and to put Indian university standards on the same level as British university standards?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): As I informed the hon. and gallant Member in reply to a similar question on 10th March, full information is contained in a Report which is shortly to be presented to Parliament.

Sir C. YATE: Is it not the case that students have to come to an English university, in order to get a proper degree, and why should they not be able to get a proper degree in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would ask the hon. and gallant Member to await the Report.

BENGAL AND UNITED PROVINCES (BUDGET GRANTS, REJECTION).

2. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the rejection of the Vote for Ministers' salaries, which is one of the transferred services, by the Bengal Council; whether he intends to allow this service to be restored to the reserved side and thus enable the Governor to restore the grant; and whether his attention has been drawn to the action of the legislature in the United Provinces, who have prevented all development and improvement schemes for the benefit of the people in the provinces from being carried out?

Mr. RICHARDS: As regards Bengal, I am aware that the Vote for Ministers' salaries has been rejected, but I think that the hon. and gallant Member will

agree, on reflection, that the solution he suggests is not feasible under the constitution. It is understood that, if necessity arises, the Governor will administer the transferred subjects and be responsible for them. I have no confirmation of any such situation as is suggested in the third part of the question as having occurred in the United Provinces.

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: In view of the rejection by the Bengal Council of the grant for the British Empire Exhibition, will the Governor have power to restore it?

Mr. RICHARDS: I must ask for notice of that question.

Earl WINTERTON: Am I to understand that the Governor, in taking over these transferred services, will have money available in order to carry them on? I understand there is no money.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is the Governor going to take over these transferred services?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand so.

Earl WINTERTON: Do I understand the Under-Secretary to assent to my proposition that the Governor has no money for carrying on these transferred services?

Mr. RICHARDS: I must ask for notice of that question.

4. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, as the result of the Swarajist campaign in Bengal, the whole of the province has, by the vote of the Council, been deprived of police, law courts, and gaols; and whether he is aware of the manifesto of Roy, issued from Berlin and addressed to the congress, advocating the destruction of the councils from within; and what steps the Government propose to take to defeat this policy?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware that Budget grants under a number of heads, including jails and administration of justice, have been rejected by narrow majorities by the Bengal Council, and that the grant for police has been reduced, but I have no reason to suppose that the effect has been, or will be, that supposed by the hon. and gallant Member. As regards the second part of the ques-

tion, the manifesto referred to is dated December, 1922, and was published at that time. It was not noticed by the congress that met in that month. My Noble Friend understands that the Government of India are taking all steps that they consider necessary to deal with Roy's independent propaganda.

Earl WINTERTON: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether the Governor of Bengal, who seems to be primarily concerned, has restored these Votes that the Council has refused to vote? If so, how does he propose to carry on the services mentioned in the question.

Mr. RICHARDS: I must ask the Noble Lord to give me notice of that question.

Earl WINTERTON: I will put it down for next Monday. Will the hon. Gentleman endeavour to get the information by then, as it is of great importance?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

EX-MAHARAJAH OF NABHA.

3. Mr. MACKENZIE LIVINGSTONE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has decided to allow the King of Nabha, who recently abdicated as the result of pressure put upon him by the Government of India, to state his case in this country?

Mr. RICHARDS: If the hon. Member's question refers to the ex-Maharajah of Nabha, the answer is in the negative.

EAST INDIAN AND GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAYS.

5. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to proceed with the placing of the East Indian and Great Indian Peninsula Railways under State management in view of the position in the Legislative Assembly, and the danger to the safety of passengers and the maintenance of the service that will arise should the present management be weakened under their control?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend does not consider that there is any reason to modify the decision to place the East Indian and Great Indian Peninsula Railways under State management.

Sir C. YATE: Is the hon. Gentleman not aware that the manager of the

[Sir C. Yate.]

Egyptian railways has resigned because the Minister there had taken all the power out of his hands, and is the same thing to occur in India?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member had better put that question on the Paper.

INDIAN ARMY (BRITISH OFFICERS).

6. **Sir PHILIP SASSOON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that great and increasing anxiety exists among British officers of the Indian Army regarding the future of their service and their future prospects therein; and whether he can give them any assurance that no changes will be made in the establishment or administration of the Indian Army adversely affecting their careers therein, or that if such changes are made adequate compensation will be given them for any resulting loss of employment or opportunity for advancement or pension?

Mr. RICHARDS: I do not think that present conditions give occasion for any such anxiety as the hon. Member refers to, and I cannot give assurances with regard to a contingency which in any case is remote. Officers affected by the recent reductions in the Indian Army received liberal treatment, and if similar measures are found necessary in the future I imagine that they will be carried out by the Government in a similar spirit.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that there is practically no case for anxiety for British officers? That is an extraordinary statement.

TANGANYIKA (TRADE ORDINANCES).

10. **Sir ROBERT HAMILTON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies in what language British-Indian traders in Tanganyika territory will be required to keep their books under the amended Trade Ordinances?

Mr. THOMAS: Traders of all nationalities may keep their ordinary accounts in any language they please, but for the purposes of the Trades Licensing

Ordinance they are required to submit evidence in a form intelligible to the licensing authority sufficient to show the amount of their profits. The accounts necessary for this purpose will have to be, as from the 1st of April, 1926 (but not before), rendered in English, French or Swahili, but this requirement will not apply to the smaller traders whose profits do not exceed £150.

Sir R. HAMILTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman satisfied that a differentiation of that sort, to the prejudice of British-Indian subjects, is in accordance with the mandate under which we administer the territory?

KENYA: IMMIGRATION REGULATIONS.

67. **Earl WINTERTON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the present position with regard to the contemplated new Immigration Regulations in Kenya; and if there is a Bill on the matter actually before the Legislative Assembly of that Colony?

Mr. THOMAS: I answered fully on the 18th of February a question put to me on this subject by my hon. Friend the Member for East Woolwich (Mr. Snell). I can only add that the draft of the new Bill will be referred to me before it is introduced into the new Legislative Council now in process of election, and that I hope to receive the draft about the middle of April.

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE (EXHIBITION GALLERIES).

64. **Mr. ORMSBY-GORE** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can yet announce the decision of the Government in regard to the future of the Imperial Institute or when the necessary legislation will be introduced?

Mr. THOMAS: His Majesty's Government have decided that in the scheme for the re-organisation of the Imperial Institute, the exhibition galleries of the Institute shall be kept open. This decision has been made in view of representations and promises of financial support from certain Dominions, and of a very generous offer from Viscount Cowdray to contribute £5,000 a year towards the cost of the galleries. A Bill to give effect to this decision and to the other recommendations of the

Imperial Economic Conference regarding the Imperial Institute will be submitted to Parliament in due course.

Sir C. YATE: Does that answer include the Indian galleries in the Institute?

Mr. THOMAS: Negotiations are now taking place, and I will explain the situation as regards the Indian galleries when the Bill is introduced.

Lieut.-Colonel JAMES: Are steps being taken to find other accommodation for the exhibits of the Imperial War Museum?

Mr. THOMAS: I will explain the details when the Bill is introduced

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: In the meantime, are we to understand nothing is being done regarding the Indian galleries?

SHAUKAT ALI: CEYLON.

71. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been called to the statements made by Shaukat Ali during his recent visit to Ceylon, in which he described English statesmen as damned liars and hypocrites, and affirmed that a lakh of Englishmen does not require much killing: whether he can now state why Shaukat Ali was allowed to land on the island when it was well known that his only object was to arouse disaffection against the Government; and what steps have been taken in the matter?

Mr. THOMAS: I have seen newspaper reports of certain speeches of this description. As I stated in my reply to the hon. Member's question of the 25th February, I have asked the Governor of Ceylon for a Report in the matter.

Sir C. YATE: Will the right hon. Gentleman demand the arrest or surrender of this man Shaukat Ali for trial in Ceylon?

Mr. THOMAS: I will demand nothing till I see the Report.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Were not these statements made before the present Government came into office?

Mr. THOMAS: I could not attempt to differentiate between statements made

before or after the Government came into office.

Sir H. BRITTAIN: May I ask where this unpleasant gentleman is at the moment?

Tuesday, 1st April, 1924.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, namely:

Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Bill [*Lords*].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a Second time

NOTICES OF MOTION.

INDIA.

On this day fortnight, to call attention to the state of India, and to move a Resolution.—[*Captain Viscount Curzon.*]

* TREATY OF PEACE (TURKEY) BILL [*Lords*].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

Lieut.-Colonel Sir EDWARD GRIGG: I beg to move to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, and to add instead thereof the words

"this House declines to proceed with the Second Reading of this Bill until it has received a definite statement from His Majesty's Government as to whether the Dominions and India have been fully informed of the liabilities in which the Empire must be involved by the guarantee of the demilitarised zones on both sides of the Straits contained in Article 18 of the Straits Convention annexed to the Treaty, and as to whether the Dominions and India are prepared to ratify the Treaty with the Straits Convention."

* References to India during this debate, for which see Index.

Wednesday, 2nd April, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LIEUTENANT CLENDINING:
ROYAL IRISH RIFLES.

Lord H. CAVENDISH - BENTINCK asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, in spite of the fact that the General Officer commanding the Allahabad Brigade and the Assistant Director of Medical Services, India, on the 30th of October, 1917, assured the chaplain of Allahabad that Lieutenant Clendinning, 3rd Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, was being sent to England because the climate of India was unsuitable to his health and that he was not being sent as a mental case, Lieutenant Clendinning was, on the 1st of November, 1917, at Bombay placed in a wired-in bungalow under an armed guard; that he was then removed on 4th November to the docks under a guard, with several certified dangerous lunatics, and handed over to Major Dunn, the officer commanding the "Takada" hospital ship, as an alleged dangerous lunatic; and whether the whole case of Lieutenant Clendinning is under the consideration of the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer to the answers given in this House by the Secretary of State for War on the 21st February and 4th March. A telegram has been sent to India asking for an early reply in the case of Lieutenant Clendinning.

ARMY AND AIR FORCE (ANNUAL) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

NEW CLAUSE.—(*Amendment of Army Act, Section 180 (2).*)

Sub-section (2), paragraph (d), of Section one hundred and eighty, of the Army and Air Force Act (which relates to modification of Act with respect to His Majesty's Indian Forces) shall be amended as follows:

After the words inquired into in paragraph (d) there shall be inserted the words "in the first instance by an independent tribunal of three officers, either serving or retired, who shall report as to questions of law and fact."—[*Colonel Sir Charles Yate.*]

Brought up, and read the First time.

Sir C. YATE: I beg to move, "That the Clause be read a Second time."

I have two Clauses on the Paper, one referring to the Army in England and the other to the Army in India. With regard to the question of an officer who may feel himself aggrieved, according to Section 42 of the Act he may complain to the Army Council in order to obtain justice. The House will realise that neither the Army Council in England nor the Viceroy in India have time properly to inquire into any such complaint. We all know that in cases of officers who have not received justice they have been ruined for life. I ask leave to add a few words so as to provide an independent Court of three officers, either serving or retired, whom the Army Council can call in and ask to inquire into the case and report as to questions of law and fact. The Army Council are very busy men, and the officer in charge of discipline has really no time to go into these cases, and he can always get as many other officers as he likes. All we want is an independent tribunal to hear officers' grievances, and if a man can only state his grievance he is satisfied. Under the present system it is a paper question, and an officer does not get a chance to state his grievance. The Secretary for War has stated that all these questions will be inquired into by a Committee, and if he says this matter will be put before the Committee and inquired into I will say no more. I trust he will do that in order that the whole question may be examined. It has been talked of for years.

Mr. WALSH: I take it the hon. and gallant Gentleman really desires permission to withdraw his two Clauses if I give him the promise he asks. I think I can promise quite explicitly that the matter shall have full investigation by the authority that is to be set up, although I cannot guarantee what conclusion may be arrived at.

Sir C. YATE: I would ask leave to withdraw the Clause.

HON. MEMBERS: No.

Mr. D. GRAHAM: Does this mean that different treatment is to be given to an officer to that given to a private soldier? I anticipated that the

Government would be willing to accept an Amendment coming from the other side of the Committee. It is rather a sad state of matters to find the adamant attitude adopted towards every reasonable Amendment put forward from this side in favour of the ordinary private soldier compared with that adopted when some special plea is made in favour of men who are very well protected both in military and civil life.

Sir C. YATE: May I say that the hon. Member is utterly wrong. If he will read the reports of the proceedings last year or the year before he will see how the matter is stated. The soldier is protected thoroughly in every possible way, but the officer has no protection, and it is in order to give him similar protection to that accorded to the soldier that I have put down the Amendment.

Mr. MACLEAN: Will the hon. and gallant Gentleman be prepared to support a similar Amendment providing that a private soldier should go before an independent tribunal composed of three privates instead of three officers?

Mr. GRAHAM: I am quite willing to wait for an answer to that.

Mr. MACLEAN: You will wait a long time. Is it not a perfectly reasonable proposal? Is there anything superior in the case of the officer to that of the man? When an officer commits a crime, is he entitled to be treated differently from a private soldier? I would like to know whether the Government are supporting this class policy? It is quite obvious that the spirit animating the hon. Gentleman who put forward this Amendment is purely a class one, and it will ill become any ordinary Member from the ordinary common folk to allow an Amendment of this sort to pass without protest.

Mr. WALSH: May I say that I have taken up the same attitude in respect of this Amendment that I have done upon all the others. It is simply a matter for investigation. I said to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that I could not guarantee what conclusions would be reached, and the hon. Member seems to think that what is asked is at once granted. It is nothing of the kind. In every previous case I said that investigation would take place, and a Committee had to be set up for that purpose.

All that will take place in connection with this Amendment is investigation, exactly as in other cases.

Mr. MACLEAN: Will the Committee which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to set up be composed entirely of officers, or does he propose to appoint members representing the private soldier? Have

not private soldiers' rights to 5.0 A.M. be protected, and who is going to protect them more properly? I want to ask the Secretary of State if the privates are going to be properly and directly represented, not by officers who are claimed as their protectors, but by representatives of themselves? We shall then understand that this Committee is going to exercise its functions properly and in an impartial manner.

The CHAIRMAN rose to put the Question.

Mr. MACLEAN: On a point of Order. I want to ask the Secretary of State whether he is not prepared to give an answer to this?

Mr. WALSH: Apart altogether from the fact that it has no relevance to this Amendment, it is quite impossible to say what the exact composition of the Committee will be. That is a matter for the Cabinet. It is a matter for which I cannot take entire responsibility. It is proposed by the hon. Member to have a person representing the private soldier. The Army Council does possess a private soldier in the Financial Secretary, the Member for Chester-le-Street (Mr. Lawson).

Mr. MACLEAN: By accident.

Mr. WALSH: He is not a private soldier by accident. He is on the Army Council, and he will represent in the fullest sense the interests of the private soldier.

Mr. MACLEAN: What will happen if the Government go out of power?

Mr. WALSH: I cannot deal with hypothetical questions. The Army Council will be strengthened by representatives of the other fighting forces, and there will be adequate consideration of all interests involved. The Committee has to report to the Cabinet, which will report to this House. Before it really proceeds

[Mr. Walsh.]

with its work, the composition of the Committee of investigation will be known to the House itself.

Mr. MACLEAN: Shall we have the right to approve it?

Question, "That the Clause be read a Second time," put, and negatived.

Thursday, 3rd April, 1924.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Indian Affairs.—That they have appointed a Committee consisting of Eleven Lords to join with a Committee of the Commons to examine and report on any Bill or matter referred to them specifically by either House of Parliament, and to consider with a view to reporting, if necessary, thereon any matter relating to Indian affairs brought to the notice of the Committee by the Secretary of State for India; and request the Commons to appoint an equal number of their Members to be joined with the said Lords.

Monday, 7th April, 1924.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Bill [*Lords*],

Read a Second time, and committed

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

CONSTITUTION.

1. **Sir HENRY CRAIK** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether this House can rest assured that no project inconsistent with the recommendation of the Joint Committee on the India Reform Act of 1919 to the effect that no revision of the constitution should take place until 1929 will be undertaken without due notice being given to this House?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): In accordance with the procedure which has been followed in the past, and is accepted by His Majesty's Government, no modifications affecting the constitution of the

Government of India established under the Act of 1919 would be proposed by any Government without due notice being given to this House.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that during the discussion of the Government of India Act in Committee Mr. Montagu said that this Section would not tie the hands of Parliament in any way? The Commission might be issued at any time.

Sir H. CRAIK: Before the hon. Gentleman answers that question, may I ask whether it is not the case that there is nothing to tie the hands of Parliament, but only what he has, I understand, admitted, that Parliament should be informed before action is taken?

Mr. RICHARDS indicated assent.

LIEUTENANT CLENDINING:

ROYAL IRISH RIFLES

2. **Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, in spite of the fact that the General Officer commanding the Allahabad Brigade and the Assistant Director of Medical Services, India, on the 30th of October, 1917, assured the Chaplain of Allahabad that Lieutenant Clendining, 3rd Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles, was being sent to England because the climate of India was unsuitable to his health and that he was not being sent as a mental case, Lieutenant Clendining was, on the 1st of November, 1917, at Bombay placed in a wired-in bungalow under an armed guard; that he was then removed on 4th November to the docks under a guard with several certified dangerous lunatics and handed over to Major Dunn, the Officer commanding the "Takada" hospital ship, as an alleged dangerous lunatic; and whether the whole case of Lieutenant Clendining is under the consideration of the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer to the answers given in this House by the Secretary of State for War on the 21st February and 4th March. A telegram has been sent to India asking for an early reply in the case of Lieutenant Clendining.

Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that officers have the right to be heard in their own defence at inquiries into their conduct or efficiency? Why has not Lieutenant Clendining been allowed this right?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like to remind the Noble Lord that this is a matter within the jurisdiction of the War Office. All that we are doing is asking for the papers.

Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK: May I ask why the War Office handed it over to the India Office? If I were to ask the War Office, should I not be referred to the India Office?

Mr. LANSBURY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the War Office has referred me to him?

Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that every medical man to whom this case has been referred has found Lieutenant Clendinning absolutely of sound mind?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand that in the last reply of the War Office they agreed to consider this question. We have asked for the papers.

Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK: Have they not been considering it for the last five or six years?

TRANSFERRED SERVICES (BENGAL).

3. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, owing to the reduction in the Estimates for the educational and medical services in Bengal, passed by the Bengal Legislative Council, the Government are now forced to dispense with the services of all officers in those departments whose salaries have not been voted, and that 700 have been dismissed; and what steps it is proposed to take to carry on these services?

Mr. RICHARDS: The facts are substantially as stated by the hon. and gallant Member. The precise number of officers who have been given notice, three months in every case, is 703. My Noble Friend the Secretary of State has the matter under consideration.

Earl WINTERTON: When will the hon. Gentleman be in a position to give us a definite answer on this very important matter as to what the Secretary of State proposes to do, in the event of these 700 men being dismissed?

Mr. RICHARDS: I hope I shall be able to give some information on the Debate next week.

10. Earl WINTERTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Governor of Bengal has taken, or is about to take, over the transferred services in Bengal and administer them; and, if so, in what way the money to carry them on will be found?

11. Earl WINTERTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he or the Secretary of State in another place proposes to take an early opportunity of stating how the administration of the transferred services is to be carried on in those provinces where the councils have refused to vote necessary supplies?

Mr. RICHARDS: I hope to be in a position to give full information on the points which the Noble Lord has raised in the course of the Debate which, I understand, is to take place on 15th April, on the Motion of which the Noble Lord the Member for South Battersea (Viscount Curzon) has given notice.

Earl WINTERTON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that this question in a slightly different form was put to the hon. Gentleman last week, and he asked me to put it down again this week? This matter is of the utmost importance. Is the hon. Gentleman aware that my noble Friend has not yet given notice of his Motion? Therefore, how does the hon. Gentleman know that it will be in order to discuss this matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I beg to inform my Noble Friend that we have made inquiries, but the Governor of Bengal has not yet made up his mind.

Earl WINTERTON: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that the Governor of Bengal has not made up his mind as to what is to happen if this state of administrative chaos continues? Are not the Government doing anything?

MARRIED SOLDIERS' PAY.

4. Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the differentiation of pay between married British Service officers, quartermasters, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, with children, serving in India, and those of the same rank serving at home; and what steps have been taken to remove the discontent caused by this reduction of pay on the part of those serving abroad in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: As the answer is rather long, I will, with my hon. and gallant Friend's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Sir C. YATE: Can the hon. Gentleman tell me, shortly, what is going to be done. Nothing?

Following is the answer:

In the case of officers so many considerations, such as the varying rate of exchange, differences in the cost of living in the two countries, differences in the conditions of service, and differences in the two pay systems, enter into the question, that a simple comparison of sterling with rupee pay converted at the rate of exchange from time to time current is, I think, to be deprecated as misleading. As the hon. and gallant Member is aware, there are certain instances in which such a comparison at the rate of exchange now current will show rupee pay for British Service officers to be at a disadvantage with sterling pay. In the case of other ranks, such minor differences of pay as exist are on the whole in favour of those serving in India. The revision of rates which is due this summer is under active consideration, and great attention is being paid to the factor of local conditions so as to ensure an adequate standard of remuneration, having regard primarily to Indian conditions. The value of rates at home after next July when these are known will also be taken into account when fixing the new rupee rates.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

5. **Mr. SIMPSON** asked whether any member of the depressed classes has been nominated as member of the Legislative Assembly of the Government of India; if not, whether any vacancy exists to which a member of these classes might be nominated; and whether it is the intention of the Government of India to provide for representation of these classes by nomination to the Assembly?

Mr. RICHARDS: No member of the depressed classes has been nominated to the Legislative Assembly, and at present no vacancy exists. But the Governor-General (with whom personally the right of nomination rests) informs me that he would certainly consider the claims of these classes should a vacancy occur.

Sir WILLIAM JOYNSON-HICKS: Is it not a fact that these classes amount to 50,000,000 people of India, and will the hon. Gentleman communicate with the proper authority to see that steps are being taken?

Major Sir BERTRAM FALLE: Are the members of other castes willing to sit with these gentlemen?

MILITARY INSTITUTIONS (INDIAN CONTRIBUTIONS).

6. **Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what sums have been contributed annually from the Indian Exchequer to various military institutions, naval and military colleges, schools of gunnery and artillery, and other similar institutions from which Indians have been specifically excluded, and whether he will take steps to prevent any such racial distinction being made in future?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand the hon. and gallant Member to refer to British training institutions. India does not contribute to any such naval institution. But she makes an annual contribution to His Majesty's Government through what is known as the capitation rate, which covers all the services that the British Government renders in the provision of trained military personnel. It is not possible to give separate figures for institutions such as those to which the hon. and gallant Member refers. Indians are admitted to these institutions so far as they train personnel for the Indian as distinct from the British service, and no racial distinction is made.

Mr. SIMPSON: Can the hon. Gentleman tell us how much is contributed by India in this way?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like to have notice of that question.

NEWSPAPERS (CENSORSHIP).

8. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that British newspapers are not allowed to be freely circulated in India; that such newspapers as the "Manchester Guardian," "Daily Herald," "Foreign Affairs," "The Crusader," the "Free-man of America," and other progressive journals are continually being stopped;

and will he advise the Indian Government to cease this censorship and allow freedom of the Press to prevail in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: No, Sir; there is no general censorship of the Press in India. If the hon. Member can bring any cases of interference with the circulation of newspapers to my notice, my Noble Friend will have them inquired into.

KOHAT MURDERS.

9. **Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any information with regard to the escape of two of the Kohat murder gang from Afghan Turkestan who are reported to have taken refuge in Afridi territory; whether the Government will bring pressure to bear on the Afridi maliks to hand over these murderers; and whether he will make strong representations to the Amir of Afghanistan regarding the escape of these prisoners, for whose safe custody and secure deportation to Afghan Turkestan he had promised to be responsible?

Mr. RICHARDS: The two men referred to have not escaped from Afghan Turkestan after deportation. It was discovered early in February that they were not included among the 28 persons who had surrendered to the Afghan authorities and were then in course of deportation. Their present whereabouts are uncertain. The matter has been under discussion with the Afghan Government, and every effort will be made to effect their capture at the earliest possible date.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is it not a fact that the Amir of Afghanistan made a definite statement that he would be responsible for the safe custody of these people, and now they have escaped?

Mr. THURTLÉ: May I ask whether the two men referred to in this question as murderers have actually been proved to be murderers; and, if not, whether it is correct so to describe them?

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Cannot I have an answer to this question? It is a question of definite fact, and must be known.

Mr. RICHARDS: I did reply—yes.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Then are we to understand that the Government at home still believe the Government of India's action in allowing the Amir to give these guarantees and keep control of these prisoners was the correct one?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a matter for debate.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

13. **Captain EDEN** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India when the Report of the Royal Commission presided over by Lord Lee is likely to be presented to Parliament; and whether an opportunity to discuss it will be given by the Government at an early date after its presentation?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am unable to make any positive statement until my Noble Friend the Secretary of State has received and examined the Report. There will be no avoidable delay.

Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS: Will the hon. Member undertake, on behalf of the Government, that no action shall be taken on this Report which would commit the House without the assent of the House?

Earl WINTERTON: Are we to understand that the hon. Gentleman refuses to give an undertaking that we shall have a debate on this very important Commission and what is his objection to giving such an undertaking now.

Mr. RICHARDS: That is a matter of arrangement between the parties.

FINANCE ACT.

14. **Captain EDEN** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the principal differences between the proposals in the original Government of India Finance Bill, 1924, and the provisions in the Finance Act as passed into law by the certification of the Viceroy?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Act as passed reduced the salt duty from Rs. 2 per maund proposed in the original Bill to Rs. 1½ per maund. It also omitted certain minor changes proposed in regard to the tariff, the principal one being a reduction in the import duty and excise on motor spirit.

ARMY UNITS (INDIANISATION).

60. **Captain EDEN** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many

[Captain Eden.]

King's commissioned Indian officers have been transferred since June, 1923, to the four regiments and four battalions to be Indianised; and what the total number of such officers in those units now is?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am unable to say accurately without reference to the Government of India, but from a reference to the Army List and Gazettes of India it would appear that six Indian officers with King's commissions have been transferred to Indianised units and that there are now nine such in these units.

OFFICIALS (INDIAN PRESS ATTACKS).

61. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if his attention has been called to the manner in which mischievous falsehoods are spread amongst ignorant people by the Indian Press, and every official who is called upon to accept responsibility in maintaining order is held up to obloquy; and whether he will now consult the Government of India as to the advisability of bringing in legislation to put a stop to this state of affairs?

Mr. RICHARDS: The more important contents of the Indian journals are brought to my notice every week. There are, no doubt, articles that could be accurately described in the terms used in the question. But when papers commit an offence or an actionable wrong, the Courts of Law are freely used against them, and I do not consider that special legislation is called for.

Sir C. YATE: Did the hon. Gentleman see the disgraceful statements in the Indian Press quoted by Mr. McPherson in the Bihar Legislative Council, and will he take steps to put a stop to the publication of such matter?

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot accept that as a Supplementary Question.

LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENT BILL (MADRAS).

62. **Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Land Revenue Settlement Bill was defeated by a majority in the Madras Legislative Council; and what action the Governor of Madras has taken in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Secretary of State has received no information on the subject, but inquiry will be made.

Earl WINTERTON: In view of the Secretary of State's responsibility to Parliament for all these matters, will the hon. Gentleman accelerate the method by which the present Secretary of State obtains information from India?

Mr. RICHARDS: We are awaiting a report of the Debates.

Earl WINTERTON: Will the hon. Gentleman give any indication when the reports will arrive, and is it beyond the bounds of possibility to send a cable on the subject?

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Have not reports appeared in the Press?

Mr. RICHARDS: Not full reports.

Earl WINTERTON: May I ask for an answer to my perfectly reasonable question, whether it is not possible to communicate with the Government of India by cable?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Noble Lord knows that we cannot accept an *ex parte* statement that appears in the Press. We are awaiting a full report of the Debates.

Earl WINTERTON: On a point of Order—[*Interruption.*]

Mr. STURROCK: On a point of Order. [Interruption.]

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that the Noble Lord is submitting a point of Order.

Earl WINTERTON: This is a very important matter, on which it is necessary, in the interests of the House, to obtain information. My point was whether or not—[*Interruption.*]

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Noble Lord put his point to me?

Earl WINTERTON: My point is, in what respect the Supplementary Question which I asked—whether it is not possible to communicate with the Government of India by cable—is out of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Supplementary Question was not out of order. It was put twice by the Noble Lord, with my permission, but he will recollect that a year ago a question might be asked of Ministers, and not answered.

Earl WINTERTON: Perhaps I may be allowed to state—[*Interruption*—] that no question that was ever put to me was not answered.

Mr. SPEAKER: I was not referring to the Noble Lord, but to Ministers.

Earl WINTERTON: I understood you were referring to me.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry that the Noble Lord thought that.

Earl WINTERTON: I am quite satisfied.

Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY: Did you not appeal to hon. Members, Mr. Speaker, to limit their supplementaries, and have not Members on the Opposition Front Bench put repeated supplementaries to-day?

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope now that I may count the hon. and gallant Member as one of my supporters in this matter.

STRIKE DISTURBANCES (BOMBAY).

64. **Mr. WALLHEAD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, in the firing in Bombay on the 7th March, the police did not observe the safeguards provided by law; that two school boys, of the ages of 11 and 12 years, were amongst the casualties; whether these boys were 250 yards away from the scene on the extreme side of the road, and that the firing was not done in the air nor aimed at the non-vital parts of the people, but at their chests; and whether, in view of these facts, a public inquiry into the conduct of the police has been ordered?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no particulars as to the individual casualties, and I am not clear as to the safeguards provided by law to which the question refers. If the hon. Member will give me more detailed information, I will have inquiries made. As regards firing in the air, I should, however, say that the police instructions specifically lay it down that care should be taken not to fire upon persons separated from the crowd nor to fire over the heads of the crowd, as thereby innocent persons may be injured.

Mr. BECKER: Is it not a fact that troops never fire over the heads of

crowds, as they might injure people further away?

66. **Mr. WALLHEAD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that at the time of the firing on strikers in Bombay on 7th March no magistrate was present at the scene of the trouble and none was summoned until later; whether, in view of the exemplary conduct shown by the strikers during the weeks of the strike, an inquiry will be ordered into the causes that led to the disturbances; and whether his attention has been drawn to the memorandum drawn up by Mr. Findlay Shirras, the director of labour in Bombay, on the position of the labourers in the present dispute, and the steps that are being taken by the Government to meet the present situation?

Mr. RICHARDS: Under Indian law the presence of a magistrate before fire arms are used to quell a riot is not essential, but Press reports state that the Commissioner of Police during the riots asked that two magistrates might be sent to the scene of disturbance. The reports which are, by regulation, made by the magistrates and police authorities on the events and the causes of any public disturbance, will doubtless enable the Bombay Government to judge whether there is reason for further inquiry. I do not know of any memorandum by Mr. Shirras answering the description given in the last part of the question.

Mr. WALLHEAD: Will the hon. Gentleman ask for a further report?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes, I will.

AHMEDABAD COTTON MILL.

65. **Mr. WALLHEAD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, in the case of the owner of the Ahmedabad Cotton Mill, of Ahmedabad, in Bombay Presidency, some 17 charges were made against him for employing women and children on night duty in contravention of the Indian Factories Act, 1922, and that, after the millowner was fined £100 for one offence, the other cases were withdrawn by the collector; and whether, in view of the seriousness of the offence, he will make inquiries and find out why this withdrawal was ordered?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not received any information on the subject, but will ask the Government of India for a report.

EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION.

67. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the European Government Officers' Association gave evidence in India before the Lee Commission on the Public Services; when such Association was formed and for what purpose; and whether it had any activities prior to this Commission being set up?

Mr. RICHARDS: I do not yet know whether this Association gave evidence before the Royal Commission. It was formed in 1922. I can let the hon. Member have a copy of its original rules if he desires.

Earl WINTERTON: Was this Association formed with the approval both of the Government of India and the Secretary of State?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes, I think so.

IRRIGATION POSSIBILITIES.

68. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Council of State at Delhi on 5th March carried, without a division, a resolution for a fresh survey of irrigation possibilities both from the rivers and wells of India, in the light of scientific advance, and for framing a programme particularly providing for the organisation of power-lift irrigation from wells; whether he is aware that no such survey has been made since 1901; and whether steps will be taken to give effect to the resolution passed by the Council of State?

Mr. RICHARDS: Proceedings of the Council of State containing the resolution were received last week, and the views and recommendations of the Government of India on it will be awaited.

PUBLIC SERVICES (RECRUITMENT).

69. **Mr. FOOT** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the recruiting for certain services and appointments for India is still done by the Secretary of State and not by the High Commissioner for India; and, if so, which are the services and appointments in question?

Mr. RICHARDS: Apart from military services, chaplains and a few miscellaneous services and appointments the Secretary of State now recruits only for

the All-India Services. Other recruitment, being in general that for all posts and services under the control of Governments in India has been transferred to the High Commissioner. I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT a list of the appointments, recruitment for which is at present undertaken by the High Commissioner.

Following is the list referred to:

List of Services and Posts recruitment for which has been transferred to the High Commissioner for India.

1. Librarian, Imperial Library.
2. Keeper of the Records, Government of India.
3. Bacteriological officers (non-service).
4. Town-planning experts.
5. Imperial meteorologists.
6. Mines—Inspectors and Chief Inspector.
7. Explosives — Inspectors and Chief Inspector.
8. School of Mines and Geology — Principal.
9. N.I. Salt Revenue Department—Commissioner, deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners and superintendents.
10. Printing and Stationery—Controller and other officers.
11. Patents and Designs—Controller.
12. Electrical adviser to Government of India.
13. Metallurgical—Inspectors and assistant inspectors.
14. Local manufacturers — Superintendents and deputy of, and chemist in Government Test House.
15. Indian Stores Department — Chief Controller and other officers.
16. Ordnance Mechanics — Chief civil master armourers, principal foremen, foremen, assistant foremen and others graded as such.
17. Appointments made in the United Kingdom to the staff of the Lawrence Military School, Sanawar.
18. Royal Indian Marine Dockyard Staff other than chief constructor, constructor, assistant constructor, and electrical engineer.
19. State Railway—Coal and Mining Department and covenanted staff.
20. Engraver and head engraver, Survey Office.
21. Photo-Lithograph Staff, Survey Office—Two managers, four assistant managers.

22. Mathematical Instrument Office Staff, Survey Office—Officer - in - charge, works manager, two assistant managers.
23. Drawing Office Staff, Survey Office—1st division assistant.
24. Chincona Plantations — Superintendent.
25. North-West Frontier Province—Agricultural officer.
26. European carpenter, Forest Department.
27. European gardeners under Government of India.
28. Curator, Industrial Section, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
29. Posts and Telegraph Department—Subordinate wireless personnel, cable foremen, foremen and assistant superintendents of telegraph workshops, instrument mechanicians for workshops and telegraph and telephone offices.
30. Appointments in the Zoological Survey.
31. All appointments made by the local Governments of Governors' provinces to posts and services under their control other than the Bengal Pilot Service.
32. All appointments made by the Government of India for service under a Chief Commissioner.

HIGH COMMISSIONER.

70. **Mr. EDMUND HARVEY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will state in what respects the Secretary of State is still carrying out the functions of agent of the Government of India; and whether he will take steps to transfer these soon to the High Commissioner's Office?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is little, if any, business now performed by the Secretary of State which can properly be described as agency for the Government of India. But my Noble Friend is always ready to consider transferring to the High Commissioner any functions which, under the present constitution, are suitable for transfer.

PLAGUE (PUNJAB).

Mr. WARDLAW - MILNE (*by Private Notice*)-asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House any information regarding the serious outbreak of plague in the Punjab,

which is said to have already resulted in approximately 25,000 deaths, and what steps the Government of India are taking to deal with the epidemic?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information beyond what has appeared in the Press. The Government of India are being asked for a report.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: In view of the great danger of the spread of the plague from the Punjab to Bengal and the fact that 700 medical services are under notice to-day, will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to see that these medical services are increased rather than decreased?

Captain Viscount EDNAM: Has the hon. Gentleman cabled for this report?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION.

BENGAL (REPRESENTATION).

7. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the rejection of the grant for the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley by the Bengal Council, the Governor of Bengal will be able to restore this grant, or what steps he is taking to ensure that the province of Bengal will be represented at this exhibition?

63. **Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Bengal Legislative Assembly have rejected the vote of Rs.73,000 to provide for Bengal's share in the Empire Exhibition; and whether the Governor of Bengal has certified the expenditure?

Mr. RICHARDS: The demand for the current year has been passed in full. A supplementary grant, which, according to my information, was Rs. 89,000 for last year, was rejected, but has been restored.

INDIAN AND BURMESE WORKERS.

12. **Earl WINTERTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if any Indian or Burmese workers were among those ordered to cease work by the strikers at Wembley on Monday last; and, if so, in view of the risk of the incident being magnified or misrepresented in India and Burma, will he take steps to have it made

[Earl Winterton.]

known in both countries that no racial significance is attached to it, and that in future adequate police protection will be given to all willing to work at the Exhibition?

Mr. RICHARDS: The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative. The second part, therefore, does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

EAST AFRICA (INDIANS).

Lord STANLEY asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies the number of Indians resident in Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika, and Nyasaland, respectively, and whether the numbers show an increase or decrease during the last 12 months?

Mr. THOMAS: The 1921 Census reports gave the number of resident British Indians as 5,130 in Uganda, 22,822 in Kenya, 9,411 in Tanganyika, and 515 in Nyasaland. I have no information as to any increase or decrease during the last 12 months.

SEPARATION OF EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS.

Captain BENN asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that four provincial Governments in India have demanded the separation of the executive and judicial functions of government, and that this demand has been put forward by the foremost representatives of Indian public opinion through successive Indian national congresses from 1886 to 1914, and that the Government of India undertook to provide machinery to carry out the demand of the four provincial Governments, he can state when it is intended that this undertaking will be carried out?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is not possible to give at present any undertaking as to the date or precise nature of the steps to be taken to secure separation.

INTERMENTS, BENGAL.

Captain BENN asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the cases of people recently interned under Bengal Regulation 3 of 1818 were examined only by two Sessions Judges ordinarily under the control of the

Executive Government, and not by independent Judges of the High Court as was stated by the Viceroy in his speech at the opening of the Legislative Assembly at Delhi on 31st January, 1924; and whether, under the circumstances, he will order their release or an open trial?

Mr. RICHARDS: The cases were examined by two Senior Sessions Judges, and the misapprehension of the Viceroy was subsequently set right by interpellations in the Legislative Assembly. I see no reason to doubt that the Judges were entirely competent to perform the duty entrusted to them, and I resent the implied slur cast by the hon. and gallant Member on the impartiality of judicial officers who cannot defend themselves against such criticism. The reply to the last part of the question is in the negative.

Tuesday, 8th April, 1924.

EAST AFRICAN COLONIES AND PROTECTORATES.

References to India during the Debate, for which see Index.

Wednesday, 9th April, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SWARAJ LEADERS.

48. Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Prime Minister whether Mr. Gandhi, Mr. C. R. Das and Mr. Motilal Nehru have been invited by the British Cabinet to a conference to be held in London?

The PRIME MINISTER: The answer is in the negative.

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER: Will the Prime Minister consider the advisability of adopting this very wise policy?

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE).

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India

whether the national members of the Bengal Legislative Council are entitled to, and do in fact, draw first-class travelling allowances in connection with their legislative duties?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not sure to whom the hon. Member refers as "national members," but so far as I am aware, all members of the Bengal Legislative Council are eligible for travelling and halting allowances if attendance involves travelling. I understand that first-class travelling allowances are sanctioned, and have no reason to suppose that individual members have abstained from drawing the allowances to which they are entitled.

DISTURBANCES, CAWNPORE.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House any information connected with the strike of Indian workers now taking place in Cawnpore; how many men and women are involved; the causes of the dispute; whether the armed forces of the Crown are being used against the strikers and, as a result, many persons have been wounded and killed; and will he tell the House what steps the Indian Government are taking to remove the causes which lead to disorder?

Mr. RICHARDS: The following information on the question of the disturbances at Cawnpore has been received by telegram from the Government of India:

"1. Dated 6th April.

Disturbances arose at Cawnpore Cotton Mill evening of Friday, 4th April, in which City Magistrate, after repeated warnings, was compelled to order the police to open fire. Telegraphic reports of District Magistrate indicate that there were four fatal casualties amongst the rioters and 19 others undergoing treatment. Amongst the police, 35 officers and men received injuries from stones and brickbats, 12 being in hospital, two seriously injured."

"2. Dated 8th April.

From communique issued by District Magistrate, it appears that work started as usual on Friday morning. There was no reason to apprehend any disturbance until about 9 a.m., when a number of men from Carding Department struck work and went round other departments. As a result a large crowd gathered in front of mill office where men were harangued by leaders and demanded payment of bonus, also payment of March wages immediately instead of on

15th April as customary, also additional month's pay to compensate for alleged dismissals. Strikers were informed that no one was dismissed and invited to resume work, but refused to work or to leave premises. Manager had unsuccessful conference with men's representatives before applying for police who had to disperse forcibly more violent section of the strikers with results already reported."

MINES (WORKING CONDITIONS).

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he would consider the desirability for investigating the conditions of men and women labourers in the mines of India and the inadequacy of their wages and arrangements for healthy living; and whether he will call for a comparative return of the annual deaths due to coal-dust explosions, and of the steps taken to minimise the increasing loss of life among men and women workers underground?

Mr. RICHARDS: The suggestions contained in the question will be communicated to the Government of India, but my Noble Friend is not at present aware of a need for special investigation into the points referred to. The regulation of mines is governed by the Indian Mines Act (amended in 1923), which contains provisions for the inspection of mines and for the health and safety of the workers. The report of the chief inspectors of mines for 1923 has not yet been received from India. It was reported that in 1922 the number of fatal accidents from gas explosions was 21. The Government of India are consulting local governments on the question of eventually prohibiting the employment of women underground. It may be mentioned that the Act of 1923 prescribes a maximum working week for all persons of 60 hours, or 54 hours below ground. The Washington Hours of Work Convention, which India has ratified, laid down a maximum 60 hours week for India.

* TREATY OF PEACE (TURKEY) BILL [Lords].

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [1st April], "That the Bill be now read a Second time."

* References to India during the debate, for which see Index.

Which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, and to add, instead thereof, the words

"this House declines to proceed with the Second Reading of this Bill until it has received a definite statement from His Majesty's Government as to whether the Dominions and India have been fully informed of the liabilities in which the Empire must be involved by the guarantee of the demilitarised zones on both sides of the Straits contained in Article 18 of the Straits Convention annexed to the Treaty, and as to whether the Dominions and India are prepared to ratify the Treaty with the Straits Convention."—[Lieut.-Colonel Sir Edward Grigg.]

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read a Second time

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for To-morrow.—[*The Prime Minister.*]

Thursday, 10th April, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

AIR SERVICE

35. **Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether the Civil Aviation Department has been approached by the Messageries Transaériennes, a French company subsidised by the French Government, with a view to a joint air service to India, by means of hydroplanes from Marseilles, via Alexandretta, to Bombay; if so, whether, in view of the halving of the expense to ourselves of such a service, the Air Ministry is giving careful and sympathetic attention to this offer; and what has been the cause of the delay heretofore?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for AIR (Mr. Leach): The answer to the first and second parts of the question is in the affirmative, but under the terms of the agreement with the Imperial Air Transport Company, the Air Ministry is precluded, as from 1st April, 1924, from

granting subsidies to any other commercial company in respect of a heavier-than-air transport service in Europe, including the Mediterranean Sea. So far, therefore, as the western portion of the proposed Marseilles-Bombay service is concerned, the only way in which British assistance could be given would be by means of some working arrangement between the new Imperial Company and the "Messageries Transaériennes." It has, therefore, been necessary to await the formation of the new Imperial Company, and no avoidable delay has occurred.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Will an answer now be sent to this company? Does my hon. Friend realise that here is one opportunity in which we can co-operate with our French friends very successfully?

Mr. LEACH: There is no doubt that the company and our French friends know our difficulties in this matter quite well.

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Ordered, That the Lords Message [3rd April] relating to the appointment of a Committee on Indian Affairs be now considered.—[*Mr. F. Hall.*]

Lords Message considered accordingly.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of Eleven Members be appointed to join with a Committee appointed by the Lords, as mentioned in their Lordships' Message, as a Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Committee nominated of Mr. Clarke, Sir Henry Craik, Lieutenant-Colonel Meyler, Mr. Wardlaw-Milne, Mr. Ramsay Muir, Mr. Scurr, Mr. Hope Simpson, Mr. Snell, Mr. Wallhead, Earl Winterton, and Colonel Sir Charles Yate.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—[*Mr. F. Hall.*]

Monday, 14th April, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MILL STRIKE, CAWNPORE.

1. **Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House any details of the mill strike at Cawnpore which is reported to have resulted in three persons being killed and 34 injured?

5. **Mr. MILLS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the firing on strikers at Cawnpore; whether the mounted police were beating the strikers with sticks or canes before there was any attempt at stone throwing by the men; and whether attempts were made by the Government to find out the men's grievances before armed police help was given to the mill owners?

51. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any further information he can give to the House as to the causes of the labour troubles which have taken place at Cawnpore; whether any more deaths have occurred; will he state how many police or other official persons were injured before the firing on the crowd took place; are steps now being taken by the Indian Government to investigate the causes which have brought about these industrial conflicts; and what steps are being taken to prevent a repetition of the same?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): No further official information has been received up to the present as to the strikes, and the resulting disturbance, beyond what was given in reply to a question by the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley on 9th April. I am hoping to receive fuller information which I will communicate to the House. With regard to the last two parts of my hon. Friend's question as to the steps taken by the Indian Government, I may explain that the subject of labour disputes is one of those for which, under the Rules made under the Government of India Act, responsibility rests with provincial governments. The subject receives the constant and anxious atten-

tion of these governments, and periodical reports are transmitted by mail to the Secretary of State. He will, however, communicate the suggestion contained in the last part of the question to the Government of India, with a view to their considering whether there is any occasion for consulting provincial governments as to the utility of further inquiry into the causes of these disputes, and into the practicability and desirability of devising measures that might tend towards diminishing the risk of their occurrence.

Mr. MILLS: Is the hon. Gentleman yet in receipt of the report of the Director of Labour in Bombay? If so, is it a fact that the reserves held by the mill owners of Bombay are 300 per cent. above those of any previous year?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is another question later on, I understand, about the report.

PUBLIC SERVICES (ROYAL COMMISSION).

2. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the statement made by the Home Member on behalf of the Government of India in the Legislative Assembly on 1st March last, that they had not been consulted about the appointments of the reporting staff to the Royal Commission on the Public Services; that the Government of India was satisfied that Indian reporters were competent and available for this work, and that Indian reporters had been utilised in connection with other commissions of inquiry, *i.g.*, the Industrial Commission, the Fiscal Commission, the Reforms Commission, and the Hunter Commission, and that a public protest meeting had been held protesting against the bringing out of English reporters; whether it is the policy of the India Office to make such appointments without consulting the Government of India when the pay is charged to the Indian taxpayer; and whether he will give an assurance that in future the Government of India will be consulted before any such appointments are made?

Mr. RICHARDS: The reporting arrangements for Royal Commissions are a matter on which the Chairman is always consulted, and I understand that in this case the Chairman particularly

[Mr. Richards.]

asked that reporters should be taken out from this country. I have seen the statement to which my hon. Friend refers. My Noble Friend has not yet received the communication which the Government of India promised should be made to him, but will of course consider most carefully any representations that they may wish to make.

Mr. MACPHERSON: When does the hon. Gentleman expect the Report of the Royal Commission?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand that the Report of the Commission was due to arrive yesterday.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the home accounts of the Secretary of State and the accounts of the High Commissioner are subjected to review by the Public Accounts Committee in India, or by what authority?

Mr. RICHARDS: The accounts of the High Commissioner are laid before the Public Accounts Committee in India. They are also included in the papers relating to Home Expenditure annually submitted to Parliament. Under Section 26 of the Government of India Act, the accounts of the Secretary of State in Council are laid before Parliament each year, and they are also laid before the Public Accounts Committee in India.

BUDGET.

4. Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that in India more than 50 per cent. of the total Indian Budget is non-votable by the members of the Indian Legislative Assembly, it is proposed to take steps to make all the Budget votable by the Assembly?

Mr. RICHARDS: The course suggested by the hon. Member would involve amendment of the Government of India Act. No proposal for this purpose has been made.

Mr. MILLS: Have any representations been made by representative Indians?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not aware of that, but will make inquiries.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (SECTION 67 B).

6. Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any recent Amendment has been made or published in India of the statutory rules under Section 67 B of the Government of India Act; whether the Indian legislative assembly had been consulted; and when the Secretary of State's sanction was applied for and obtained?

Mr. RICHARDS: My hon. Friend is presumably referring to Amendments of the Indian Legislative Rules to provide a suitable procedure for dealing with Bills recommended or certified under Section 67 B of the Act. Amendments with this object have been made by the Government of India with the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council and were published in India on 13th March. In pursuance of the statute they are now being laid before both Houses of Parliament. So far as I am aware, the Assembly was not consulted.

REFORMS (INQUIRY).

7. Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Government will consider the desirability of associating with the inquiry proposed by the Government of India into the working of the reforms some non-official Members or Ministers who have had actual experience of such working?

Mr. RICHARDS: This question had been mentioned in correspondence with the Government of India, but that Government has not yet made any final recommendation with regard to it.

PRESS PROPAGANDA.

8. Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the danger of the propaganda disseminated in the Indian Press by the extremist agitator, as quoted in the Behar and Orissa Legislative Council in which the Government of India is depicted as a cruel oppressor and a cunning exploiter, that its hands were stained with blood, that it dishonoured women and massacred children, and that the Government and all its works must be forthwith ended; and whether he will consult the Government of India with a view to the reintroduction of the Press Law which was repealed two or three years ago?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not seen any report of the nature mentioned in the question; but I would again remind the hon. and gallant Member that the Courts in India exist and that use is made of them when offences or torts are committed. It is not contemplated to suggest to the Government of India to revive the Press Act.

Sir C. YATE: Is the hon. Gentleman not aware that the Courts in India are not made use of?

Mr. RICHARDS: My information is that the Courts are made use of.

Sir C. YATE: Can the hon. Gentleman give me a single case?

DISTURBANCES (JAITO).

9. **Mr. SNELL** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the letter addressed by 41 members of the Indian Legislative Assembly, including well-known leaders of Indian public opinion, asking for a committee of officials and non-officials to make a thorough investigation into the firing at Jaito, and that a mere magisterial inquiry will not satisfy the needs of the situation; and whether, in view of the fact that the official and non-official accounts widely differ as to the whole affair, he will order a public inquiry to be made on the lines suggested?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not at present seen the letter referred to, though I understand such a letter was sent. As I stated in reply to a question on the 10th March, the Secretary of State has no doubt that the Government of India will take all necessary steps to ascertain the full facts, if they have reason to think that they have not already been ascertained, and he does not think it necessary to make any suggestion to them in this connection. The appointment of a committee to make a general inquiry into the grievances of the Sikh community has been under contemplation, and I now observe in the Press that it has just been announced in India.

Sir C. YATE: Is it not the case that this inquiry was conducted by a Sikh magistrate?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is true.

Sir C. YATE: Then should not the Sikh magistrate's decision be considered as final?

WAR OFFICE (OUTSTANDING CLAIMS).

10. **Mr. WINDSOR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will bring to the attention of the Secretary of State the advisability of associating with himself any competent military financial adviser from India like Sir B. N. Mitter, who holds that office in the Government of India, in conducting negotiations with the War Office regarding the amounts outstanding between it and India?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend will not fail to make use of the best expert advice at his command in negotiating the settlement of these questions.

ARMY (BRITISH OFFICERS' AND MEN'S PAY).

11. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has yet inquired into the accuracy of the calculations supplied to him showing that a married British service captain ordered to serve in India loses pay at the rate of £22 per annum, a married lieutenant of over seven years' service £63 per annum, and under seven years' service £68 per annum, married quartermasters, whose pay depends on length of service as such, lose by service in India in every grade, and married warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men lose, respectively, about £49 14s., £20 12s. 6d., and £16 2s. 6d. per annum; and, if so, whether, in order to put a stop to this reduction of pay now inflicted upon these officers and men ordered to serve in India, he will grant the same marriage allowances in India as are granted at home?

Mr. RICHARDS: My reply to the hon. and gallant Member's question of 7th April was based on a careful examination of the figures which he has been good enough to supply. A certain disparity in the case of the officers is admitted, and I can assure the hon. and gallant Member that we shall endeavour to remedy it in connection with the revision which is due next July. But I cannot guarantee that any particular solution will be adopted.

Sir C. YATE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that that is the reply which he gave me the other day?

MILL INDUSTRY, BOMBAY.

41. **Mr. DUKES** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he

[Mr. Dukes.]

has now had an opportunity of considering the Memorandum drawn up by Mr. Findlay Shirras, the director of labour under the Government of Bombay, which Memorandum shows that the reserve funds of the mill-owners in Bombay had been increased by 345 per cent.; and whether he will recommend the Government of India to take any steps in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have now seen a Press report of the Memorandum, which appears to have been submitted to the Bonus Dispute Inquiry Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay. It gives the figure named as the increase in the reserve funds of 38 of the mills, the total number of which I understand is 82. The Committee reported that the results of the working of the mill industry as a whole for the year 1923 are such as to justify the contention of the mill-owners that the profits do not admit of the payment of a bonus. The question of reserve funds does not appear to be one in which Government could interfere.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that last year was a most disastrous year in the industry in Bombay?

42. Mr. DUKES asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, as a result of his promised inquiries, he can state why the cases against the owner of the Ahmedabad Cotton Mill, in Bombay Presidency, were withdrawn by the collector after a conviction had been obtained in the first case and a fine of £100 imposed for employing women and children on night duty in contravention of the Indian Factories Act, 1922?

Mr. RICHARDS: It will take some time to obtain the report which is being called for through the Government of India. I will communicate with my hon. Friend when it is received.

ASSAM LABOUR AND EMIGRATION ACT.

43. Mr. DUKES asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware that, under the Assam Labour and Emigration Act, it is possible for a planter to have a labourer arrested for leaving his service, and that a labourer

is made criminally liable for any breach of service; and whether there have been protests from Madras about the recruiting of labour from that Presidency for work on Assam plantations?

Mr. RICHARDS: The provisions to which my hon. Friend refers in the Assam Labour and Emigration Act have been withdrawn some years ago. As regards the latter part of the question, no protests have been received by my Noble Friend or reported by the Government of India.

GENERAL ELECTION (STATISTICS).

45. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he will give a Return for the last General Election in India showing the number of electors in the case of each Provincial Council, the Legislative Assembly, and the Senate, respectively, the number who voted, the number of candidates, and the number returned, as given in the case of the elections for 1920?

Mr. RICHARDS: I hope to receive shortly from India material for such a Return, which will be presented as soon as possible thereafter.

Sir C. YATE: Thank you.

MURDERS (KOHAT).

48. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any further information with regard to the murderers who have escaped from Afghanistan to Afridi country; and whether pressure is being put on the Afridis to give them up?

Mr. RICHARDS: Definite information as to the two missing members of the Kohat gang is still lacking. The Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province has taken the matter up with a joint *jirga* of the Afridi and Orakzai tribes, and has secured satisfactory undertakings from most of the sections concerned. Further pressure will be applied if necessary.

AFGHANISTAN (ARMS).

49. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any further consignments of rifles and machine guns are being sent by French firms to Afghanistan; whether any consignments are still being held up

in Bombay; and can he state the numbers of rifles and machine guns that are being supplied by French firms?

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald): In reply to the first part of the question, His Majesty's Government have no information. The answer to the second and third parts of the question is in the negative.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Have these consignments which were held up gone through?

The PRIME MINISTER: Yes.

AKALI SIKH JATHAS.

50. Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is taking any steps to prevent the setting out of these Jathas of Akali Sikhs; and whether he is aware that such Jathas are stirring up unrest in districts which were previously undisturbed?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has already made inquiries and has ascertained that the question has been fully considered by the Governments in India, who must necessarily be in the best position to judge of the effect of these Jathas and of the policy to be adopted in dealing with them.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Can the hon. Member say whether they are adopting the policy of stopping these Jathas?

Mr. MILLS: Were these the same men whose aid was requisitioned in France and who proved capable, willing, and loyal at the time when we wanted them?

NEWSPAPERS.

52. Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that complaints are made in India about the delay in delivery and, at times, confiscation of the following newspapers and periodicals: the "Crusader," the "Unity," the "Outlook," the "Freeman," the "Daily Herald," the "Islamic Review," the "Manchester Guardian Weekly," the "Living Age," the "Nation," the "New Majority," the "New Russia," and the "Saturday

Herald"; why there is this censorship and delay in the delivery of newspapers and periodicals in the Madras Presidency; and will he take steps to put an end to the same?

Mr. RICHARDS: On the 7th April I offered to have inquiry made into any specific cases. I can only repeat that offer, and the assurance that there is no such censorship.

Mr. LANSBURY: Is it not specific enough to give the hon. Member the names of the journals which are not allowed to go in? What more information does he require?

Earl WINTERTON: Are we to understand from the reply that there will be no interference with the powers which the last Government had for dealing with these matters if they desired to do so?

Mr. RICHARDS: My reply was that there is no censorship.

IRRIGATION.

54. Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the views and recommendations of the Government of India on the Resolution passed by the Council of State at Delhi on 5th March for a fresh survey of irrigation possibilities both from the rivers and wells of India, as no such survey has been made since 1901?

Mr. RICHARDS: The views and recommendations of the Government of India have not yet been received. An inquiry on the subject has been sent to them.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

INDIAN SERVICES.

Mr. J. HARRIS asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the approximate gross cost, exclusive of overhead charges, of each of the concurrent open competitions of 1911, 1912, 1913, 1921, 1922 and 1923, for the Indian Civil Service and other administrative group appointments; and what was the total number of vacancies which had been filled as a result of each of those competitions?

Mr. GRAHAM: The following are the particulars asked for:

Date of concurrent open competition for Indian Civil and other Services.	Gross cost, exclusive of overhead charges.	Total Number of appointments made.
	£ s. d.	
August, 1911 ...	1,887 11 10	125
" 1912 ...	1,812 2 9	107
" 1913 ...	1,645 17 9	101
" 1921 ...	1,948 8 10	30
" 1922 ...	1,547 17 0	30
" 1923 ...	1,614 11 9	30

ALL-INDIA SERVICES.

Mr. D. GRENFELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the all-India services recruited by the Secretary of State as distinct from those recruited by the High Commissioner from India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The all-India services are the Indian Civil Service, the Indian Police, Forest, Educational and Agricultural Services, the Indian Service of Engineers, the Indian Veterinary Service and officers of the Indian Medical Service in civil employ.

IMPERIAL SERVICES (CAPITATION PAYMENTS).

Mr. GRENFELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the annual contribution made by India to His Majesty's Government through the capitation rate amounts to some 35 lakhs of rupees annually; if this sum is distributed among various military institutions in this country; and at what rate per head for officer and rank and file the capitation rate is fixed?

Mr. RICHARDS: In 1923-24 a provisional payment of £1,700,000 was made to the War Office in respect of the cost of raising and training the recruits required for service in India, the cost of training including, *inter alia*, the pay of the recruits and a share of the military training establishments maintained in this country. This payment was at the rate of £25 per officer and man of the British Army serving on the Indian establishment. In addition, a provisional payment of approximately £100,000 was made to the Air Ministry in respect of cost of training Air Force personnel based on a *per capita* charge of £50.

Mr. WINDSOR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the cost of the education of British soldiers who serve for less than five years in that country is repaid to the Indian Government by the British Treasury?

Mr. RICHARDS: The present capitation rate for the training of British troops sent to India is based on an average period of service in India assessed on the basis of past experience, and it is not necessary to take account of individual departures, in the one direction or the other from that average. The mode of calculation of the rate in future is under consideration.

Mr. F. GOULD asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether Indians are admitted to the artillery schools; and whether India is contributing directly or indirectly through capitation grants to the cost of such schools?

Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many Indians are being trained at military institutions both in England and in India for King's commissioned rank in the Artillery, the Tank Corps, and the Air Force?

Mr. RICHARDS: No Indians are being trained for King's commissioned rank in the Artillery, Tank Corps, or Air Force, none of which arms are open to officers of the Indian Service. As I explained in my reply to the hon. and gallant Member for Blackpool (Lieut.-Colonel Meyler) on 7th April, it is not possible to say how much of the capitation payments are attributable to the training institutions in question.

BENGAL: TRANSFERRED SERVICES.

Mr. D. GRENFELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is in the discretion of the Governor of Bengal to certify which are essential and which are non-essential services in the transferred Departments; whether the Governor of Bengal has decided that educational and medical services in Bengal are non-essential services; and whether the Secretary of State proposes to take any steps in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is almost impossible within the limits of question and answer to explain accurately the somewhat intricate points raised by the hon. Member on the provisions of the Government of India Act, but I hope to

be able to make the Government's position clear in the course of the Debate to-morrow.

ARMY (INDIANISATION).

Mr. F. GOULD asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether there is any bar to the appointments of Indians to the staff departmental services of the Army in India; whether any Indian has been so appointed; and whether Indians are given opportunities to qualify for such posts?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no bar to the appointment of Indians to the staff and departmental services of the Army in India for which British officers of the Indian Army are eligible, and they have the same opportunities to qualify. Indians have been so appointed.

IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (DIFFERENCES OF OPINION).

Captain TERRELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, within the last six months, there have been any cases in which the decision of His Majesty's Government has overridden the advice of the Indian Government on matters of domestic concern; and, in that case, what these cases have been?

Mr. RICHARDS: It would not be in accord with established usage to make any statement as to the cases in which differences of opinion may have manifested themselves in the course of the mutual discussion which takes place between the Indian Government and the Secretary of State as representing His Majesty's Government, in the discharge by the latter of his responsibilities.

Tuesday, 15th April, 1924.

Captain Viscount CURZON: I beg to move,

"That this House, viewing with anxiety recent events in India, regrets the lack of a clear statement of policy with regard thereto by His Majesty's Ministers."

In moving this Resolution I wish to make a humble apology and to ask for the indulgence of the House. I am here to-night in spite of the protest of my medical officers. I was in bed all day yesterday with something or other—I do not know what it was—and, anyhow, it was quite sufficient to make it difficult for me to get my remarks together in

order to make a speech to-night. I fear that, in consequence, there will be a number of omissions from the remarks which I had intended to make. I can, however, with confidence leave those omissions to others who will follow me on this side of the House. There is one special point I wish to make at the outset. The turn of the wheel of chance, in the shape of the Ballot, has pushed me into a position of prominence in connection with India—a position which I certainly have never sought. Despite the fact that I served many years ago upon the East India station, I do not claim to be an authority upon India. I did not come back from India and try to write a book, as most people do. It so happens that my name is one which is already associated with India to a very large extent. Before I say anything else it should be made quite clear that I am not the Lord Curzon who is associated in the mind of the public with India. It is very necessary that that should be explained, because we are always told that everything we say here—I think it is true—goes out to India, and it may possibly lead to confusion in the public mind in India if I did not make this disclaimer in regard to my name.

It is essential that anyone who endeavours to speak upon India should, as far as possible, not bring any heat into the discussion and should not say anything which others might think to be mischievous or provocative. It is true, that I am identified with one side of this House and that hon. Members opposite are identified with another side, but I appeal to them, in the best interests of our great Indian Empire, not to look upon things too much from a party point of view. I will do my best to refrain from making any party remarks, and I am sure that hon. Members opposite will not be slow to follow suit. The point of view which I desire to take in regard to India is this. I look upon India, not as an expert, but as a "man in the street." Many things have happened and are happening in India which have made those of us who value the good name of England and its great traditions, who value the Indian Empire as "one of the brightest jewels of the British Crown," a jewel beyond price, feel profoundly anxious with regard to that jewel. We feel sometimes that the jewel is getting

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a little loose in its setting, and we want, as far as possible, to be reassured in the matter. That is the main purpose of my motion.

It has been obvious for many generations past that firm government and wise statesmanship have brought India to a very great position in the world. All of us can say that we desire that the position which India holds to-day in the world shall not be weakened, but shall be strengthened, and that is the point of view, I imagine, of the ordinary sane Englishman. What makes many of us profoundly anxious is a combination of many circumstances. There have been many curious happenings in India. We have had certain utterances by the Secretary of State in another place, and we have, of course, the advent to power of a Socialist Government. I am sure that right hon. and hon. Members opposite will not think it an unfair remark if I say that anyone holding the views which they must know that I hold, would have profound anxiety with regard to India in view of the professions of opinion to which members of the Socialist party have given vent in the past. I say that only in order that right hon. and hon. Members may understand the anxiety which many of us feel in the absence of an authoritative declaration in this House upon the subject of India.

Let me deal with the position of India as I see it. I will go as far back as 1919. One might go back much further, but I am not sure that it would be found a very fruitful line of search. I go back to 1919, when the Government of India Act was passed. I opposed the passage of that Act, because I did not think that it would contribute to the good of India in the long run. I thought the Measure was likely to bring about such a state of affairs as has occurred—a state of unrest and anxiety, and possible harm to the Services in India. My point of view now, however, is that that Measure is on the Statute Book, that it was accepted by India, and that it is the duty of every true constitutionalist to do his best to uphold that Act in the letter and in the spirit. As soon as that Act was passed, what I will call the Left wing in India denounced the Measure as utterly inadequate. They took the point of view

which I expected them to take. In the year 1920 we had the first common use of, or common allusion to, the names of Mr. Gandhi and the Ali brothers. They were undoubtedly the leaders of the Left wing in Indian politics. They said that the Act was inadequate and that nothing less than certain demands would meet with their approval. Their chief demands were (1), a settlement of the Turkish peace in accordance with Moslem ideas; (2), a settlement of the wrongs in the Punjab; and (3), the grant of complete Home Rule to India. I am putting these facts forward, not in any party spirit, but as a reason for the anxiety which many of us feel on the advent of the Socialist party to power. The next thing that happened was the visit to India of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and of the hon. Gentleman the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury. They gave specific assurances to the extremists in India that the Indian Nationalist movement had the full support of the Socialist party. Speaking at Allahabad in December, 1920, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster said:

"The British Labour party is with the Indian people in their desire for democratic Swaraj."

On another occasion he added:

"It was immaterial whether it was Home Rule or independence."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury declared:

"In their fight for freedom and for the completest form of self-government the democracy of Britain is wholeheartedly with the Indian Nationalists."

He spoke, too, of the identity of aim existing between the Indian Nationalist movement and British Labour, which—

"had pledged itself to the application of self-determination to India."

In an article in the "Pioneer Mail" of 21st January, 1921, we read that it was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury who declared before leaving India:

"The whole nation was behind Gandhi."

He can surely have had very little idea of what the whole nation consists or what it means.

The CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY of LANCASTER (Colonel Wedgwood): Can the Noble Lord give me the authority for that quotation?

Viscount CURZON: I will give it to my right hon. and gallant Friend before the Debate concludes if he wishes. I wish to quote now from the "Pioneer Mail" of the 28th March, 1924. There is a passage relating to the Bolshevik conspiracy trial which is going on at Cawnpore at the present time. In it is a quotation from a letter signed "R.," dated 23rd January this year. The initial "R." presumably refers to Mr. Roy, who is well known as being in close touch with Moscow and with extremist opinion in India, and this is what he says:

"The Labour party has come to power. . . . There is some disillusionment in store for a section of the Indian politicians, particularly Baptista, Chacha and Lajpat Rai. They banked upon their patron Wedgwood's advent in the India Office. But MacDonald had to buy the right of resident in 10, Downing Street, with high price. The Liberals made it sure he would not do anything to tamper with the Empire before they consented to put him in a place from which they can pull him down at any moment. . . . Wedgwood, who has committed himself too much in supporting the Indian Magna Charta, had to be put away in favour of an ex-Colonial pro-Consul whose membership of the Labour party was hardly known until yesterday. A scion of the aristocracy who ruled Jamaica to the satisfaction of Imperialism, in which he has a large stake, can be entrusted with the trusteeship of India."

That is a quotation from a letter written by a Moscow extremist, and I am quite certain it could not meet with the approval of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and I only quote it because I think these things should be known not only to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, but to the country as a whole, in order that we may get a fuller appreciation of the situation. It must also be remembered that the Chancellor of the Duchy and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, when at Nagpur in the same year, were present at the extremists' Congress, and I am sure the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will not deny that at that Congress the most violent anti-British and seditious speeches were made. I do not know that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman made any very active protest.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: On the contrary, I did make a protest, and it was noted in the Press of India. .

Viscount CURZON: I am very pleased to hear it, but my researches have not

brought that fact to light. However, I have no doubt the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will take the opportunity this evening of explaining matters. In 1921 the Government of India Act came into operation, and that year also marked the end, or the failure shall we say, of the non-co-operation movement. That movement was instituted by Mr. Gandhi, and hon. Members know what it was. The year 1921 also saw the trial and conviction of the Ali brothers. Nothing to which I wish to allude happened until 1922, which was signalised by the arrest of Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi was convicted for sedition and was awarded a sentence of six years' imprisonment, and his position was quite straightforwardly summed up by Mr. Gandhi himself at his trial when he said:

"I knew I was playing with fire, and if I am freed I will do it again."

Two more years passed, and this year, 1924, together with the advent of the Labour Government, sees Mr. Gandhi unconditionally released. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"] I can quite understand that there are hon. Members opposite who do not agree with the conviction of Mr. Gandhi and look upon him as a wrongly convicted man, but they will agree that he went through a proper form of trial before he was convicted and sentenced, and he himself was quite open about it, because he stated that he did not regret what he had done and, if given the chance, would do it again. Mr. Gandhi himself does not deny that fact, and his action with regard to India has undoubtedly been responsible for the loss of many hundreds of lives. [HON. MEMBERS: "No, no!"] I do not think it can be denied that the methods which he pursued have been responsible for the loss of a great many lives. The grounds which are given for his release are those of ill-health. I wish to know what did the doctors recommend with regard to Mr. Gandhi. I think it is of importance that this should be known. It would be as much a misfortune for India if Mr. Gandhi were released because of a Conservative party being in power as it would be if he were released because of the Liberal party or the Socialist party being in power.

To make India the sport of party politics is one thing which will render it quite certain that India will be plunged

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into depths of misery and suffering which she has never hitherto plumbed. Her life has been fairly quiet up to now. [HON. MEMBERS: "Oh!"] Well it has been. I submit to hon. Members opposite that from the Mutiny until just before the Reforms Act we have comparatively peaceful times in India. There have been outbreaks, but not of a serious character. But if you make India the sport of party politics it is a desperate gamble, and one which will never pay whoever tries it. I notice that Mr. Gandhi was released with the advent to office of the Socialist Government, and I want to know if that release was political or for reasons of health. The Government have only to say, and if the Government give me an assurance that it was for reasons of ill-health, I shall undoubtedly believe it; but as we see it to-day, we see this curious concatenation of circumstances: the advent of a Labour Government and the release of Gandhi. I would also point to the fact that we have in India now a great Pro-consul who was a former Lord Chief Justice, and I can hardly believe that a former Lord Chief Justice could sacrifice justice to expediency. With regard to the possible association of the Socialist party with it, there is another thing I notice, and that is that in the "Daily Herald" of the 8th February this year, there are the following passages:

"There is no doubt that the Swaraj party will be prepared to co-operate with a Labour Government, in which they can have confidence. . . . Unfortunately, Labour's predecessors have left behind an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust, and it takes a long time to get this removed, but Gandhi's release has begun the new movement of mutual understanding."

HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"

Viscount CURZON: Then hon. Members opposite associate Gandhi's release with the advent to power of the Socialist party. The next thing I notice is the Labour Manifesto of 20th February, which states that the National Council once more fully associates itself with the people of India in their demand for political and economic liberty. It assures the Indian workers of its sympathy and support in their struggle against the inhuman conditions of their labour; welcomes the release of Gandhi; calls for the unconditional release of other Indians imprisoned for

purely political offences, dissociated from acts of, or incitement to, violence, and reiterates its view that the Kenya decisions as affecting the relations between white and Indian settlers should be reconsidered.

Mr. LANSBURY: By whom was that issued?

Viscount CURZON: It was the Labour Manifesto.

Mr. LANSBURY: Where from?

Viscount CURZON: I suppose from Eccleston Square. It urges that the Commission to be set up for revision of the Government of India Act should not be delayed for five years but should be immediately appointed, and, in view of the adoption of Mr. Moti Lal Nahru's resolution in the Legislative Assembly, asks the British Government to consider the advisability of inviting representatives of the various parties in India to consult with it regarding the acceleration of full self-government, which should be impeded by no claim that Britain is the rightful ruler of India.

I would like to pass from those topics to a little more direct allusion to the state of affairs in India to-day. With regard to the moderates, you have, first of all, the Moderate or Liberal party, who profess co-operation with the British Administration, who thereby secure power in office, but who all the time are working steadily to displace the British element in Indian Administration. I would take, first of all, as representative of them, Mr. Sastri. I think he will be taken as being a moderate man. On the 28th February he said, in the Council of State, that the British members of the Service are there "on sufferance," and he rejoiced to see them humiliated. None of the three Indian colleagues of the Viceroy, who were present on that occasion, made the smallest protest or repudiated his views, and Sir T. B. Saprú has publicly expressed his adherence to Mr. Sastri's view.

In regard to the extremists, first of all you have them divided into four groups. You have the revolutionary Akali Sikhs of the Punjab, you have the small faction of the Ali brothers, who are preaching the gospel of sedition and non-resistance to Afghan invasion, you have the Hindu extremists, who want to expel the British

from India by "non-violent" methods, and you have those who still adhere to Gandhi. In every case the extremists have made the most wild promises to each of those to whom they make their chief appeal, and in every case they have represented that the only thing that stands between their followers and what they want is the existence of the British Empire, and although those interests are absolutely in conflict in many cases, these promises should at the same time be taken into account. In the last four years, while this intensive agitation has been going on, there has been more bloodshed, more loss of life and property, and more damage done to India than there has been during the previous 60 years. In fact, I do not think it would be exaggerating matters to say that as the British power becomes weaker, India lapses deeper and deeper into anarchy.

I would like to say a few words about the Services. I know that a Commission is sitting and is going to report, and that the Government have given a pledge that a day will be given to the House of Commons for the discussion of that Report, but when the Commission will report and that discussion take place is quite uncertain. What is certain is that all is not well with the Services in India, and all is not well for, I believe, a very clear and distinct reason, for just one thing, namely, that the Services have no sort of guarantee under present conditions with regard to their future. How can anybody entering the Indian Civil Service, anybody putting his son into the Indian Civil Service, say what the position of that boy or that official will be in the next 10, or even five, years' time, without an authoritative declaration from the Government as to where they stand in the matter? I say that that declaration should not be delayed one minute. The Government ought to make it at the very earliest possible moment. Up to now, every year, some 60, I believe, of our best students, from places like Oxford and Cambridge, used to go in to the Indian Civil Service, but I believe that now we get about four or five, and those not of the best type that we used to get. I am sure hon. Members opposite will not think that that is a gain to India. If we send people to India to help out our administration there, surely we ought to send our very best. Second-rate men will not do, and

you can only get the very best if you give them a satisfactory assurance in regard to their future. In my opinion, we must tell them what is going to be the position of the Services in India, not in 10 years' time or in 15 years' time; you must say what is going to be their position within the next 25 years. If you do not, you cannot expect to get the best type of Englishmen, and nothing but the best, I say, is good enough for India.

With regard to the Indianisation of the Services, hon. Members here know probably as well as I do that the Government of India Act limited the Indianisation of the Services in India to a little over 30 per cent., but they may not know that the Indianisation of the Services has gone to something like 60 per cent. at the present time, the reason being that you cannot get the Britishers. They are not to be had under present conditions. It has gone much further than the Government of India Act ever contemplated, and I say that it merits the most serious attention of His Majesty's Government. I do not altogether absolve previous Administrations from blame in this matter. I want to be quite fair, and I do not want to put the blame for the present position of affairs entirely on the present Government. They have not been in office long enough, but they have a great opportunity to make their position quite clear, and if they would only do that, I believe they would be doing a very good day's work for India.

There is one other thing I should like to touch upon, that is in regard to the election in India. We see a tremendous demand for some enlargement of the Government of India Act. Do hon. Members opposite realise that the ordinary educated Indian forms about 2 per cent. of the population? If you take the all-Indian electorate it is about one in every 280. The remainder have no votes at all. When you talk about India having the vote you are talking about an infinitesimal portion of the population: 97 per cent. or 98 per cent. of the population, the agricultural classes chiefly, are absolutely without the franchise at all. Whatever we may do in India we cannot divest ourselves of our responsibility in regard to these classes in India. This was clearly shown in the recent debate in the All-India Assembly on the Tariff Resolutions. The British member in charge of the proposals which have been forced upon the

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Government by the great majority of the Indian members—mainly urban members—against the protests of the few representatives of the rural masses, had the candour to say this:

"If the agricultural classes (over 90 per cent. of the population) were able fully to grasp the issues involved in this question of Free Trade *versus* Protection, if they were able fully to bring their influence to bear upon this Assembly, I doubt very much whether this Assembly to-day would accept my Amendment—namely the tariff proposals"—

and this was an Amendment which he had been forced to bring in by the people to whom the Government has been handed over in India. He doubted whether he would be putting that Amendment forward! This is a thing of which we do not want to lose sight. In regard to the declarations with respect to India, I would just like to give three, which I think it is essential should be in the minds of the House to-night. On 2nd August, 1922, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) made a speech which I remember listening to with the greatest possible pleasure, and in the course of that speech he said this with solemn emphasis:

"Britain will in no circumstances relinquish her responsibility to India. That is the fundamental principle which will guide every party that ever has any hope of commanding the confidence of the people of this country."

The next declaration to which I would like to direct the attention of the House is that of the present Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman is in a different position to his predecessors in that he has direct personal knowledge, for he has been out to India, and has written a book upon it. I think we may claim that he is one who has direct first-hand knowledge of India, and I cannot believe that he will be misled by the demands of any narrow section of Indian politicians. He realises, I am sure, the seriousness of the case, and that the present Indian politicians have no claim and really cannot say that they represent the 98 per cent. of the population without the franchise. I thought I had the quotation, but I find I have not, but I think the declaration which the right hon. Gentleman made when he first came into office is in the minds of the House. Shortly after the

Government came in he said that if the people thought that the present extremist campaign in India was likely to lead to an alteration in the action of this country that they were making a great mistake.

There is another reference, and that is of Lord Reading. A few days before the passage of the Budget, Lord Reading said:

"There is now a spirit in India which, if I am to credit all I read, is bent on the destruction of the reforms unless it immediately obtains that which is impossible for any British Government to grant forthwith—that is complete Dominion self-government."

I only want to allude to those declarations in order that the House may have a knowledge of them. There is one other by Sir Malcolm Hailey, who till lately was the home member in the Government of India. Taking part in the debate upon the Budget in India the other day, he said:

"The British nation will not give further constitutional reforms unless they are satisfied that a measure of advance could be properly utilised for the advantage of India, and that it would not be influenced by criticisms of British trusteeship. The Assembly was being asked to throw the first step to self-government in the face of the British Parliament. The home Member asked the Assembly to consider whether the proposal of the Pandit would help India. The King's Government must be carried on, and no section in British politics would be favourably influenced by such action as that proposed."

Those are strong words, but I hope that His Majesty's Government to-night will be able to give an assurance that the words of Sir Malcolm Hailey will not be repudiated in this House. Let me now say a few words as to what happened in the Indian Legislature. That is another thing which has given grave anxiety to those on this side of the House, and indeed all who value the greatness of the British Empire in India. We have seen in the Indian Legislature first of all the rejection of the Finance Bill. That has obviously been done with only one idea, namely, to make the working of the present reforms in India impossible. If that is so, what is going to be—I think we are entitled to know—the attitude of the Government? I am firmly convinced that the people who took this action never did a worse day's work, not only for India but for themselves, and for this reason: How can anybody, how can those who resort to such extremist measures,

and take such misguided action, claim in the same word that extension of self-government—how can they possibly justify it—when by their action they are demonstrating their total unfitness for anything of the sort? The result of the rejection of the Budget was that the Finance Bill was reintroduced on the narrowest possible lines to ensure safety and tranquility and the interests of British India, and the Government were enabled to give much needed relief to the Provinces of Madras, the United Provinces, and the Punjab. You have the same state of affairs in Bengal; there are the Swarajists who refused to grant the salaries of the Ministers and to vote vital supplies. This is what the Calcutta correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" said when talking about the state of affairs in Bengal:

"The Budget has emerged in such a battered state that the situation confronting Lord Lytton is a very delicate one. I understand, however, that interpreting widely the hazy provisions regarding his powers of certification he has decided temporarily to retain his Ministers, and to approve expenditure sufficient to cause the least possible damage to essential services. Even so, my estimate of 700 as the number of officers belonging to the Health and Education services, who are to be dismissed, was below the mark. Altogether 1,200 officers will shortly be under three months' notice. Fortunately before the expiry of this period the present grotesque position, which has resulted from the tactics of the Swarajists, can be re-submitted to the Council."

On this question several attempts have been made to elicit a clear statement from the Under-Secretary of State for India as to what action the Government of Bengal has taken or is about to take. I have followed this question with interest, but so far I do not think any satisfactory answer has been forthcoming. We know that a long speech was made by Lord Lytton which is, I am afraid, too long to read in its entirety to-night, but it was reported in the "Pioneer Mail" and I hope it has received the attention of the Government. The same state of affairs which occurred in Bengal also happened in the Central Provinces and the United Provinces, and in fact all over India. I will now come to the declaration of the Government and to the statement made by the Secretary of State for India in another place on the 26th

February. He said on that occasion one or two things which those who have studied his speech have found to be somewhat misleading. One thing he said was:

"The Government of India Act provides that not later than 1929 a Royal Commission should be sent out."

The Government of India Act provides that "Not earlier than 1929" and that is a great difference. There is a great difference between "not earlier" and "not later," and if "not later" is the correct interpretation it gives a great scope for agitation in India. In the same speech the Secretary of State for India said:

"We stand for the present by the provisions of the Government of India Act."

What is meant by that statement? Why are these assertions not made quite clear? In the same speech the Secretary of State proceeds to say:

"I am glad, and the party which I represent is glad, that Mr. Gandhi has been released from prison, because it is repugnant to human nature that a man of his intelligence should be treated as a criminal."

[HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"] As a matter of fact, Mr. Gandhi was convicted of the most serious charge of sedition. [Interruption.] An hon. Member opposite who interrupts me is a member of the Communist party.

Mr. LANSBURY: Who do you mean?

Viscount CURZON: I mean the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley.

Mr. LANSBURY: If I were a member of the Communist party, I should not mind owning up to it, but the Noble Lord has made a great mistake.

Viscount CURZON: Does the hon. Member deny it?

Mr. LANSBURY: Yes, I do deny it.

Viscount CURZON: Then I withdraw it unreservedly.

Mr. LANSBURY: When you make a charge of that kind, the onus of proof rests on you.

Viscount CURZON: I thought you were at their meeting on Sunday morning. Mr. Gandhi has recently stated that he realises the consequences of his action,

[Viscount Curzon.]

and he would do the same thing again.

I would now like to sum up.

9.0 P.M. I want, and those who think as I do want, a specific and a clear statement from the present Government as to where they stand as far as India is concerned. I want to know whether the present Government endorse the declaration of Sir Malcolm Hailey in the Debate on the rejection of the Finance Bill in India. I think it is important that declarations like these should be backed up by the Government. I am certain the Government do not approve of the action of the extremists in India, and they do not want to depart from the letter and spirit of the Government of India Act. I want to hear a declaration from the Government with regard to the services in India. It will not be enough for the Government to promise us a day for discussion at some uncertain date which may be provided if Parliamentary conditions permit. I would like the Government, now that they have a chance to-night, to tell us what steps they are taking to carry out these declarations. I ask the Government is it too much to hope that the Prime Minister's declaration when he first took office will be translated into action and that Indian problems will be regarded not as party questions, but as national questions. I want to look at them from the national point of view, and whatever party is in power I hope it will assert and give effect to the principle that Great Britain will, in no circumstances, relinquish her responsibility to India. Such a policy would at once rally to our cause not only the Indian masses, but the best section of the educated classes, hearten the Services now depressed and disorganised, and enable Britain's work in India, which has been shamefully neglected since politics overshadowed administration, to be pressed forward with renewed hope and vigour.

Sir HENRY CRAIK: I beg to second the Motion. My Noble Friend began his speech by appealing to the House on account of a physical disability which I think his vigour to-night has belied. I have to appeal to the House for indulgence owing to the more solid reason of a great permanent disability owing to the weight of long years, during which I have perhaps lingered superfluous on the stage. I feel doubly the sense

of that responsibility which we must all feel, however insignificant we may be, about uttering words in this House which may be spread, and may have an effect which we do not desire them to have. I do not want to range over the whole sphere to which my Noble Friend has addressed himself, but I wish to speak with that sincerity of feeling and eagerness for the good of India which I desire to inspire in others. It has been my luck to ask several questions of the Under-Secretary of State. I think he will acquit me of any want of consideration in the questions which I have put, and I recognise in him most fully and abundantly that courtesy which counts for a great deal in this House, and, what is much more, that sense of responsibility which rests upon him and upon those who are associated with him in the Government of India. So far as I have been able to see, he has reflected faithfully and, I believe, sincerely, the words, which gave confidence to many of us, uttered by the Prime Minister on his accession to office. I believe the Under-Secretary has acted in that spirit, and I trust he intends to do so.

While, however, I speak with all moderation, I do not think I should be acting quite fairly if I refrained from giving expression to the doubts and misgivings which were felt by many of us when this movement first began. It was started in 1917 by a declaration suddenly made from the Front Bench from the Government of the day, a declaration that could not be discussed and could not be answered, made at the end of the Session, when there was no other opportunity of discussing it; and it was followed immediately by decisive action, in spite of the doubts that we felt. We were often told that we had no right to object, because Parliament was committed by this declaration, unanswered and undiscussed, of the Secretary of State of that time, Mr. Montagu. That announcement of 1917 was followed by inquiries and by the visit of Mr. Montagu to India, which, in turn, was followed by the concoction of a scheme for reconstituting the Government of India. The main principle of that scheme was the extraordinary piece of machinery called dyarchy, a spider's web spun out of the brain of a doctrinaire pedant, full of all sorts of traps and catches—the sort of brain that would produce a written

Constitution which looks very well on paper, but lacks altogether the imagination that tries to realise that scheme in actual work. The Bill came in 1919, and I had the honour of belonging to the Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons which considered it. I was in the minority in that Committee. Of seven Members of this House, I was the only one on that Committee who had spoken against the Bill; the others had all given it more or less cordial support. I do not think that that Committee was a very well constituted or balanced Committee. We heard very full evidence of all kinds. We heard evidence, among the rest, from the extremists in India. Our choice was very catholic. We even included amongst our witnesses one whom I do not think even hon. Members opposite will consider to have been a good representative of India—the notorious Tilak.

Mr. LANSBURY: Hear, hear! I think he was. He was one of the best Indians you ever met.

Sir H. CRAIK: I am not surprised to hear that, because, really, the hon. Member has passed that period when I am surprised at anything he utters. I do not know if he knows anything about the facts, but I think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster will, perhaps, even there, not completely support him, broad as his sympathies are.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: He was a personal friend of mine.

Sir H. CRAIK: I do not think that anyone who knows India, or is a great friend of India, will think that Tilak was exactly one of whom Indians in general would approve. We heard all this evidence, and we heard, besides, a great many members of the Indian Civil Service. We heard evidence on the part of the extremists and of many other Indians. We listened with patience, and of those members of the Indian Civil Service who gave evidence before us, there was—and I say this without reserve or exception—scarcely one who did not profess himself ready to do his very best to make any scheme of change work well. I am perfectly certain, and I think that other Members who sat on that Joint Committee with me will confirm what I say, that not one of them showed the slightest hesita-

tion in saying that he would do his very best to make these changes a success. I was out-voted, but am I not entitled to have a little doubt as to whether I was so entirely wrong, when I hear the verdict of several of the Ministers who were responsible for that Bill?

I look to their utterances only last week. It was on that occasion last week in the House of Lords that that Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, from whom my Noble Friend wishes to be distinguished, stated that he abominated the system of dyarchy, and that there were many things in that Act of 1919 which he profoundly disliked; but, nevertheless, he was not only an assenting party, but one of those who were responsible for the Bill. I do not want to use strong language, but it seems to me that that is a piece of that self-complacent compromise which the late Coalition Government sought to identify with broad-minded statesmanship. I find, too, the utterances of another of the authors of that Act of 1919. In the House of Lords, only a week ago, Lord Balfour excused himself by saying that, when the Act was passed, he was much occupied with other things, and happened for a large part of the time to be absent from England; and yet he proceeded, in a long, elaborate and philosophical speech, to prove what I think is hardly to be denied, that the whole movement was a hazardous experiment of a gigantic character. Am I mis-describing his speech in the House of Lords last week? Another Member of that same Coalition Cabinet—I will not give his name, because it would be unkind—to whom I privately expressed my own misgivings, answered me that he really knew nothing about India or about the proposals which were being made. That was a specimen of Cabinet responsibility under the Coalition Government.

We loyally accepted the Act when passed. We recognised, and I still recognise, the honesty of purpose that actuated Mr. Montagu, who is a friend of my own, for whom I have great respect, much as I differ from him in some respects. We recognised his honesty of purpose, and, although we were entitled to doubt the measure of composite wisdom that had been brought to bear on the question in the Cabinet, yet we loyally accepted these proposals, and we have no wish to depart from the

[Sir H. Craik.]

enactments in that Act of Parliament. We must, however, remember the essential point, and it was a point upon which the Joint Committee were absolutely unanimous in their decision, without a single dissident. The Preamble of the Bill says:

"And whereas progress in giving effect to that policy can only be achieved by successive stages, and it is expedient that substantial steps in this direction should now be taken;

And whereas the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples."

That Preamble has not only legislative force, it has far greater moral force, and these words give security not here alone, not in Parliament alone, not even amongst the Civil Service, much as I sympathise with it, but also to a far greater interest, and that is the interest of the people of India themselves, for which we are responsible. We accepted this. I have a vast amount of correspondence with civil servants in India, nearly one-third of whom are my own constituents. For 30 years I have had almost unbroken weekly correspondence with them. I am certain that the civil servants never, in their letters to me or in anything they proclaim, have been disloyal to the duties that lie before them.

I am not going to follow my Noble Friend in raking up all the disagreeable things that have emerged since the Act was passed. I think in some ways the less said about them the better. We have to look forward with hope, although with anxiety. What are the two extremes of opinion as to the action now before us? The one is: Scrap this scheme, resume your authority, let there be no longer any playing at this representative Government, exercise the old authority over them. The other extreme is: Abdicate your responsibility, give up the great task which has been imposed upon you, and for which you are responsible before the eyes of the world and leave India to its fate. I believe both of these extremes are equally fraught with danger. To scrap the scheme now would be to go back upon our word. It would be an act of cowardice, if we really analyse it, the cowardice of the man who attempts to

use his great force to curb an inferior opponent. Let there be no thought of that. It may be that anarchy, disorder and trouble may so grow, in spite of ourselves, that we may be compelled to exercise a greater authority than we wish and to use more drastic measures. But do not let us by one word of ours hasten that time, and do not let us contemplate it as a probable result of the present situation. But equally, I say, the other extreme of abdicating our position is wrong. We have to choose our course of action. The worst course of all is indecisive drifting. That succeeds nowhere, either in business, in politics or in life. Let us be clear that we know where we are moving and what we intend. We are ready, I can assure hon. Members opposite, and they will find those in India amongst the administrators also ready, to co-operate in pursuing a clear and definite course. We shall suggest nothing that is inconsistent with their principles, so far as I am able to understand them, nothing inconsistent with their patriotism, and nothing inconsistent even with that prevalent distrust of officials which seems very common amongst the benches opposite.

We ask them to advance, but to advance gradually, because that is the only safe way, and we ask them to declare their adhesion to the principles laid down in the Preamble of the Act, that that advance has to be determined by the British Parliament alone. We ask them to have no tampering with any part of the provisions of the Act and not to close down certain Sections of the Act as if they had less validity than other Sections. That Act provides in several of its Clauses a clear course of action in the case of a breakdown in certain administrative parts of the machinery. It provides for certification by the Governor-General should that certification, after due consideration, be felt to be the only way out of a difficulty that threatens to plunge the country in misery and in anarchy. Do not consider that as if it were something exceptional, not to be used on ordinary occasions and to be looked upon with horror. It is equally a part of the Act which this House of Commons agreed to and it is in fact in the very forefront of the Act. Do not think you can put that Act justly into operation if you select certain parts of it which are popular with

certain extreme parties and neglect altogether the other Clauses which conflict with the objects of these extremists. Then I ask you if you have to modify—you have plenty of powers to do it—modify only by using your powers of drafting new rules within the terms of the present Constitution. That gives you very wide powers indeed. That also is a part of the Act and I have no wish to shirk it or avoid it, but do not be so rash as to go beyond that power of making rules which the Act provides and begin a process the end of which is absolutely uncertain. Thirdly, I would ask you to support your administrators. I do not think anyone who speaks for the Government will deny the loyal action evinced by the administrators of India, even though many of them, I know, must have doubts, misgivings and anxieties and are sorely troubled. I wonder if I could tell the House a not uninteresting anecdote about a certain relative of my own, placed in a very responsible position, when the Sikh troubles were arising. He urged on the native Minister that the only way of dealing with these Sikh troubles was by legislation in the Legislative Assembly. The answer of the Minister was:

“No, that would expose me to very great unpopularity, either from one sect or the other. You cannot ask me to promote that legislation. You must undertake to solve the difficulty by administration.”

That is a specimen of the difficulties which our administrators have to encounter in their lonely work. Do remember this: The Indianisation of your Service is proceeding at a far greater rate than any of you, even the most extreme, contemplated when the Act of 1919 was passed. Things beyond your control have made that Indianisation proceed far beyond the 33 per cent. which was contemplated at that time. I urge you to take these three courses: Proceed gradually on the responsibility of Parliament; deal with all the parts of the Act with an equal hand and with impartiality; trust your administrators, and give them the sympathy that they require in their heavy task. In old days we knew that Service when it had hard work indeed, always hard work. It was hard work of a sort that we who go and spend a few months in the cool weather in India have very little idea of. They were upheld, however,

by the love and friendship of those whose work they were trying to do, and whose friendship they often successfully gained. To-day they are met with frowning brows, and downcast eyes, and suspicion on every side. They look to you, the Government, to sustain them in the difficulties of their task. Do not let them be disappointed. If they are disappointed, the loss, the discredit, will fall on you, and loss and injury will fall on India. Lastly, having urged these three courses on you—courses which are not inconsistent with any of your principles—I ask that you do not utter a word, or do an act, that gives any indication of support of the opposite extreme, that of abdication. What does that abdication mean? Are you content to leave the 320,000,000 people, various in race, in sect, in birth, in character, in habits, and in deeply engendered peculiarities, and to thrust suddenly on that varying mass the task of founding a representative system according to Western methods? Was there ever an experiment attempted in the whole annals of history so rash, and so rash on a gigantic scale? We have to guard our responsibility. While you choose your course here, avoid giving any encouragement to that most fatal of hopes in India; that one day the British people will abdicate their duties and their grave responsibilities to the great millions of India, and will shrink back from a heaven-sent task.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: I think the whole House will be grateful to the Noble Lord the Member for South Battersea (Viscount Curzon), who has sacrificed his right in the Ballot in order to give the House a chance of discussing Indian affairs. I think it reflects very curiously on the Government that a Debate of this magnitude should be granted to the House by virtue of a private Member's Motion. The Government have been in office for three months. We have had a statement of policy in the House of Lords, which, in effect, was not a statement of policy at all, and instead of the Prime Minister arranging to give this House an opportunity of debating Indian affairs as they ought to be debated, we have succeeded in securing a Debate only by virtue of a private Member's Motion, and even so we have not the Prime Minister here to give us his own policy

[Mr. Simpson.] in this matter. [*Interruption.*] I felt great sympathy with the Under-Secretary of State for India as he sat there under the eloquence of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Scottish Universities (Sir H. Craik). He reminded me of the rabbit sitting under the fascinating eye of the snake. [*Interruption.*] I do not for one moment compare the right hon. Gentleman with a snake, I was only referring to the Under-Secretary's feelings.

I think, in listening to the two previous speeches, we have rather got away from the Motion. The Motion before this House is:

"That this House, viewing with anxiety recent events in India, regrets the lack of a clear statement of policy with regard thereto by His Majesty's Ministers."

The Noble Lord, in most of his speech, was engaged in trouncing the Labour party, or certain members of it, for their action in India, or in connection with Indian subjects. His reference to recent events was very sketchy. The right hon. Member for the Scottish Universities was engaging his memory on the history of the Act of 1919, but his memory does not go back far, because this advance did not begin in 1917, but in 1858. For in that year Queen Victoria made this statement:

"And it is our further will that so far as may be our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, for the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge."

The Act of 1919 was a legitimate descendant of that declaration.

I want, as far as I can, to avoid anything that might make things difficult for the Government of India. They have had a very difficult time, they still have a very difficult time, and the main burden falls on them. At the same time we here, in Parliament, are the ultimate authority, we are ultimately responsible for the Government of India; the Act of 1919 is an Act of Parliament, and we here are the people, if that Act requires amendment, who have to amend it. With regard to the existing state of affairs in India, my own information is, that affairs in the districts are very much better than they were. The relations between the district officers and the residents are

everywhere, according to my communications, in a much better condition than they were in 1921. That is all to the good. At the same time, recent events have not only very seriously affected the Government of India but they have alarmed Members of this House. The Akali movement was referred to by the Noble Lord as one of the extremist movements. I do not look upon it in that light. The Akali movement is a puritan religious movement and it has now taken a political tinge, for reasons which I hope to examine. The Maniktala conspiracy was a sequel to similar conspiracies which hon. Members will remember took place at the time of the partition of Bengal and at the time of the passing of the Act in 1919. The fact that these conspiracies exist among ordinary common people in the villages seems to contradict the statement of the Noble Lord that these people are not politically influenced at all. At the time of the Debate on the Second Reading of the 1919 Act, Mr. Montagu said:

"There is no more fallacious platitude than that which is on the lips of so many critics of Indian affairs, that it is a country which never changes, a country which undergoes none of the emotions which other countries experience"—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 5th June, 1919, col. 2298, Vol. 116.]

That I believe to be absolutely true. I speak with some diffidence, because it is seven years since I left India, and during the last seven years conditions have changed so greatly that it seems probable that one would not recognise the India that one knew in 1916 if one returned to it to-day. This is a proof of the fact that India is changing and that India is not the same as in years gone by, and that the village people we knew in 1916 were different from the people as they are to-day. There is a legitimate interest in political matters which extends even through the villages. We have to realise that the feeling about which we are anxious is there for some reason, and we should diagnose the reason.

The Noble Lord referred to the Act of 1919 and to its breakdown in Bengal and the Central Provinces, and I think he also mentioned the United Provinces. We all know that the Act has broken down in its working in the Legislative Assembly. In the Provincial Legislatures there are two reasons for the breakdown. The first reason is that the Indian Ministers have not got the entire charge of their portfolios that India anticipated.

they would have under the Act. The second reason is the very natural disgust at the failure of the diarchical system. The Diarchy has been anathematised by my right hon. Friend opposite, and quite rightly so. Diarchy is a horrible word.

Sir H. CRAIK: And a horrible thing.

Mr. SIMPSON: Quite so. It is a system which is unworkable, and a system which has broken down. Is that not proof positive that the Act under which the diarchical system exists requires amendment? Hon. Members admit that the diarchy is a failure and that it will not work, and yet they say, "Stick to the Act, do not amend it." How are we to get rid of the diarchical system unless we amend the Act? It is essential that the Act should be amended if we are to get rid of the diarchical difficulty. In the Legislative Assembly we find the same state of affairs. The Governor-General has to certify. How long is he going to certify? Is certification a satisfactory method of administration? If not, surely we want to evolve some other method by which the Governor-General can carry on his functions if the Legislature is not going to support him. Nothing could be worse for this attempt at reform in India than for the Swarajist, or whoever he may be, to say that all he has to do is to reject the Budget in order that the Viceroy shall certify. He says: "It does not matter, we shall get the money anyhow."

This is a radically bad system and one that requires amendment in the interests of the Indian Government itself. In Lord Reading we have a man of liberal mind who has been patient and who has been thorough in his desire to give the reforms a real trial, and in Sir Malcolm Hailey we have a man of the greatest talent, of whom possibly no Parliamentarian in this House is an equal. The experiment has been given the best opportunities under these two men, it has had its best chance and has failed, and yet hon. Members say, "Leave it alone."

The Noble Lord's description of the Swarajists is not quite correct. The Swarajist is much like other men. He is a Swarajist because he can see no other way out. May I read a few words from a speech of one of the most notable Swarajists, Mr. Moti Lal Nahru, when he was moving his Amendment that complete

self-government should be granted to India. He said:

"We have come here to do something which we have not been doing so far. I think it will mightily please my friends of the Congress, who are known by the name of "No-changers," to hear what I am about to say—but I do not mind it, I have never concealed it. We have come here to offer our co-operation, non-co-operators as we are, if you will agree to co-operate with us. That is why we are here. If you agree to have it, we are your men; if you do not, we shall, like men, stand upon our rights and continue to be non-co-operators."

It may be said that that offer was made in connection with this amendment demanding self-government.

Sir H. CRAIK: Does not that show a very marked change of opinion?

Mr. SIMPSON: It may be a marked change of opinion, but a man is not an extremist if he is willing to change his opinion. Hon. Members opposite will not believe that these men can change; they believe that every man of them is a Conservative and that he never changes. It is not so. These men are open to reason. There are Swarajists in India to-day who are open to reason, and if you treat them fairly they will treat you fairly and help you in your difficulty.

In regard to the Act of 1919, there seems to be a belief in this House that Section 84 of this Act is exclusive, and that there cannot be a Commission before 1929. May I read the relevant words:

"On the expiration of 10 years after the passing of the Government of India Act, 1919, the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament, shall submit for the approval of His Majesty the names of persons to act as a Commission for the purposes of this Section."

That is to say that at the end of 10 years there must be the Commission, but, on the other hand, there is nothing in the Section to say that there must not be a Commission before the end of 10 years. May I quote what Mr. Montagu said in regard to that Section of the Bill when it was in Committee in this House?

"It does not tie the hands of Parliament in any way whatever. There can always be a Commission upon it in the interim."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 4th December, 1919: page 782, Vol. 122.]

That was in answer to a question put by my hon. Friend the Member for Mile End.

The idea that this is a law of the Medes and Persians is a complete mistake. If we in this House decide that we shall

[Mr. Simpson.]

have an inquiry before the 10 years are up, then we shall have our inquiry and nothing can stop it, and if the Law Officers of the Crown hold that it cannot be undertaken under the Statute, even that would not stop it, for it would not take the House very long to amend the Section. This Act was not intended to frame a Constitution for India. Mr. Montagu said about it:

"This Bill does not pretend to give India a Constitution that will endure. It is transitional. It is a bridge between government by the agents of Parliament and government by the representatives of the peoples of India."

It is a temporary Act. It was an experiment. It was a leap in the dark. We had nothing to guide us. There was no precedent, and I think it a marvel that the thing was as good as it is, but it was certain that it would not be perfect. Here we find, owing to recent events, that this Act is not a perfect Act, and if we can amend it, why should not we? Why should we not find out where the machinery is wrong and set things right? The Government of India propose a Committee, but they propose it with the deliberate intention that the Act shall not be amended. In the House of Lords the Noble Lord, the Secretary of State for India, read a quotation from one of Sir Malcolm Hailey's speeches on the 18th February, which was made on the authority of the Indian Government. He said:

"We have again considered the position very carefully and I am anxious to emphasise that in what I say I speak with the full authority of His Majesty's Government. Before His Majesty's Government are able to consider the question of amending the Constitution, as distinct from such amendment of the Act as may be required to rectify any administrative imperfections, there must be full investigation of any defects or difficulties which may have arisen in the working of the transitional Constitution now in force. In 1919 Parliament, after the fullest consideration, laid down a scheme, transitional in its nature, but nevertheless carefully devised with a view to effecting steps necessary for the progressive realisation of ideals embodied in the preamble of the Act. It is not to be supposed that the British people would be lightly inclined to consider a change in that Constitution, and it is bound to concentrate attention for the present on such imperfections in the working as may have been disclosed."

Then he goes on to suggest this Committee. Is it not the position to-day that

what we want to find out is what these imperfections are, and to put them right? The only way in which we can put them right if they are due to this Act is by amending the Statute. Therefore the path of the Government is plain. What they have to find out is where the Act is not working rightly, and to amend the Act. The only way to do that is to send out a Commission to find out what the defects are. It appears that the Government of India think that if the machine requires small repairs, such as may be effected by rules under the Act, we should repair it, but if the machine requires major repairs, which cannot be effected by rules under the Act, then we should leave it alone. Is it a logical thing that if there is a small defect we are to amend it, but if it is a great defect we are to leave it alone for the next five years?

Our very difficulties seem to me to be the measure of our success. It is owing to the intense interest of the Indians in politics that we are having this difficulty. Whatever may be said about the interest of the British, we have got to remember all the time that the people to be considered are the Indians. We have got to encourage the Indians to think that we are going to give them within a measurable time Dominion self-government. That has been promised. They believe that this Act will prevent them for 10 solid years from having any chance of advance in that direction, and will prevent them from advancing at the end of the 10 years if the machine is not put right. Let us put right the failure of the Act and let us make such amendments of the Act as may be necessary to go forward without fear towards the end which has been put before us since 1917.

Mr. SCURR: I congratulate the Noble Lord the Member for South Battersea (Viscount Curzon) on bringing forward this Resolution. I also regret that there is not a greater opportunity of discussing this important question of the future of India. Every Member of this House will agree that it is of supreme importance to the whole future of the British Empire, or, as I prefer to call it, the British Commonwealth. I agree with the Noble Lord who brought forward this Motion that India is the brightest jewel in the British Crown. I agree with him also in the

desire that India shall always be associated with the British Crown, but if the policy, pursued at the present time, of simply regarding every expression of opinion from India as being merely the expression of opinion of extremists to which no consideration should be given at all, is continued, if we meet all the demands that are made by refusing, then in no circumstances shall we be able to preserve India to the British Commonwealth.

It is rather remarkable that, despite the whole history of the development of the British Empire, despite the fact, as we know, that it was always by the extension of the blessings of self-government to other parts of that Empire that the Empire has been preserved and consolidated, we still find taken up the attitude that we ought not to go any further along that road, that the people who are asking for self-government are not in any sense of the word qualified for it either because of reasons of education or for some other reason, and that, therefore, we are the only people who are able to look after them, and they are unable to look after themselves. Against that attitude I desire to protest in the strongest manner. So far as we are concerned, we put forward in that declaration, which has been quoted for us to-night, of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, plainly before the Indian people the desire that they should take their place as equal co-partners in the British Empire.

This movement going on to-day asking for full self-government in India is in no sense a new movement. It has been going on gradually and increasing steadily for a large number of years since the institution of the Indian National Congress in 1885, a Congress which, I agree, was very largely called into existence by the friendly efforts of those in India who recognised that it was their duty to try to carry out the declaration of Her Majesty. That Congress has developed as years went on, until the time came when, during the War, we had that slogan, which was sent out to the whole world, that Britain was fighting for the self-determination of nations. The Indians have accepted that slogan. They want self-determination, because, as was once said by a late Prime Minister of this country, self-government is far better than good government when that govern-

ment is opposed by the inhabitants of a country. And so the movement has developed, and we have had the various reforms, down to the Montagu-Chelmsford Act, which recognised all the way through the gradual development that was going on in India.

To-day, what do we find? We find that, after that declaration in regard to self-determination, when the Indians put forward their claims, assisted by people of English birth, their demands were not met. We remember how Mrs. Besant was deported, and threatened with imprisonment, because of the ideas which she put forward when asking for a gradual development of self-government for India, until it achieved Dominion Government. Then we had the Press Act, the Rowlatt Act, imprisonments, deportations and, finally, the supreme tragedy of all—that of Amritsar. I happened to arrive in India immediately after that great tragedy had happened, and realised the feeling which had been aroused. I had extreme difficulty in trying to convince my Indian friends whom I met in all parts of India which I visited, that the Government were sincerely desirous in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report of giving local self-government. But, after the Amritsar incident, I had great difficulty in convincing them that there was any sincerity at all about it. With regard to further developments, what do you find, for example, with regard to the handling of the question of Kenya? When you find Indians who had been migrating to that part of the Empire even before we went there, put into an inferior position, and an agreement entered into by which they were brushed aside, can you wonder if you find what you are pleased to term extremism developing?

In so far as India is concerned, if you are not prepared to face the issue, and immediately say that you will examine into these grievances—because that is all that is being asked for at the present time—do not say that all we have to do is to stand by the 1919 Act. That Act is not a law of the Medes and Persians, but simply an Act of the British Parliament, passed in all sincerity, and when we find mistakes have been made, it is our duty to remedy those mistakes as quickly as we possibly can. But, of course, the majority of Members of this House, like the majority of the British people them-

[Mr. Scurr.]

selves, are, unfortunately, totally ignorant in regard to India. They are, unfortunately, ignorant regarding the desires, and wishes of the Indian people and of their development. As the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Hope Simpson) said, he was there seven years ago, and he would not be prepared to say to-day how the opinion of India had altered since that time. And that is perfectly true since I was there four years ago. There is a development in that country; there is a consciousness of nationality which is bound to find expression, and we who have been the creators, to a very large extent, of many nations in the world, and of which we can be proud, ought also to be proud to help this great nation once more to regain its position, as the majority of the Indian people desire at the present time, in co-partnership with this country. Britain and India together would make a strong force in the world, that, in my opinion, would make for peace throughout the whole of the world, an association of two great peoples—a great people of the West, and a great people of the East. All we desire at the present time is to

start an inquiry, to send out

10.0 P.M. to India a Commission which will be able to go through all

these grievances that have been put forward by the Indian people. Are you going to say, because people put forward grievances, because they do not happen to belong to our nationality and race, that they are to be brushed aside? Are you going to make the same mistake with regard to India that you made with regard to Ireland? Years and years ago you could have settled the Irish question, and now, to-day, you have the awful tragedy that is taking place there, only because you did the right thing too late. Do not let us do the right thing too late in regard to India. Let us appoint this Commission, in order that it may inquire and produce a scheme whereby we shall get a revision of reform at the earliest possible opportunity, and, at any rate, not later than 1926. Let us have an endeavour to secure Provincial autonomy at the earliest time. If Provincial autonomy had been granted, and responsibility had been placed on Indian Ministers for India's domestic affairs with regard to the Provinces, we should not

have had the trouble with which we are faced to-day. We want this inquiry to determine the lines to be followed in the inevitable Indianisation of the services. Only yesterday the Under-Secretary of State for India told us that not a single Indian was being trained for a Commission in the Air Force or the Tank Force, and so on. What is the good of saying these people are unable to defend themselves, and urge that as an excuse for no further development of self-government, when you will not even allow them to take the opportunity of training themselves in order that they may defend their own country?

Earl WINTERTON: Will the hon. Gentleman explain what he means by the statement that Indians are not trained to defend their own country?

Mr. SCURR: I was giving the reply of the Under-Secretary of State for India yesterday, that no Indians were being trained for the Air Force and for other forces. There are some being trained for the Army, I know, but for the Air Force, and all the most up-to-date forms of warfare, Indians are not being trained. I say, therefore, they are not having an opportunity of being trained for the defence of India. I think that follows from the reply of the hon. Member. That is the position. I had an Amendment on the Order Paper, but I do not propose to move it, because there would not be a proper opportunity of discussing it in the time at our disposal. But I hope the Government will take their courage in their hands, and will say they will appoint this Commission to go out and inquire, and be able to call the politicians of India of all parties together, so that they will be able to see how far we can go on the road to meet them. If we do that, I feel that India will be friendly to us in every sense of the word, and that the two peoples will unite together to benefit the whole world.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I am sure we are all very grateful to those who have taken part in the Debate, because of the excellent spirit that has been shown with regard to what is, after all, one of the most difficult Imperial problems facing any Government at the present time. One rejoices to find, at any rate, that we are unanimous upon one

thing, and that is the declaration of August, 1917. I would remind my right hon. Friend the Member for the Scottish Universities (Sir H. Craik) that that particular declaration, although I believe it was read by Mr. Montagu in this House, was prepared by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. A. Chamberlain). I am sure that every party in this House subscribes unreservedly to the desire that some day India will be a full-fledged Dominion attached to the great Commonwealth of British nations. I should like, if I can, to try to consider this problem in all its bearings, and, if I may say so, from the true perspective. I would suggest to my hon. Friends behind me, in the first place, that one of the great difficulties about India is that it is not a homogeneous unit. We are not dealing with a single country in the European sense of the term: we are dealing really with a sub-continent into which for many generations different races have been pouring, who in many cases have been unable to get out again, the last subduing the one that preceded it. You have then very distinct strata of society in India to start with. You have the Primitives, the Aryans, the Scythians, the Mongolians, the Europeans. This is not the only difficulty, because, cutting right across and through this strata, you have great religious chasms or fissures which have tended further to keep these races from assimilating with one another. But that is not all the difficulty. These different nationalities, we are all willing to admit, are at various different stages of development, from the savage tribes on the North-West frontiers to the highly intellectual dwellers on the plains and in the river basins.

It is into this kind of society that we, with the best intentions, I believe, have attempted to introduce the democratic institutions of the West which we have evolved in this very place after a strenuous struggle extending over a thousand years. I would remind my hon. Friends behind me that we, even in this very place, have not yet been able to reduce this struggle for constitutionalism into a system. At any rate, the Members of the Government will agree that nobody seems to know exactly how our constitution is working at the present time, and we feel that Government in opposition is much easier than it is from these

benches. I remember a phrase in which it was said that

"The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." Parliament in 1919 decided to give to India a temporary, transitional constitution, to last presumably for 10 years. The object of that was gradually to train the peoples of India in the art of self-government so that eventually they might, as I have suggested, take their place alongside the other free nations in the British Commonwealth. It was also laid down that the development should be by gradual stages and the decision, as to when the next steps are to be taken rests with this British Parliament. I should like to say a word or two about the Government of India Act, because there seems to be a great deal of misunderstanding concerning it. The object of the Act, as far as I can see, was, first of all, as far as possible to establish complete popular control in the local bodies; secondly, to give to the Provinces the largest measure of independence of the Government of India compatible with the discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities; thirdly, to maintain the authority of the Government of India as indisputable in essential matters, pending experience of the effect of the changes; and lastly, to relax very considerably the control both of Parliament and of the Secretary of State.

The Indian Legislature consists of two Chambers. There is a Council of State, which consists of 60 members and not more than one-third of these are official members. There is the Legislative Assembly, which is probably the more interesting body, which consists of 145 members; 105 of these are elected, the rest are nominated, and not less than 26 can be officials. The reason for the 10 years' experiment apparently was that we should have three consecutive Parliaments upon which to base our decision as to the future. The Indian Legislative Assembly has power to make laws for all persons within British India, for all British subjects within the native States, and for all native Indian subjects in any part of the world. The assent of both Chambers is necessary for the passing of a Bill, and differences of opinion between them are got over by a joint session of the two Houses. The Governor-General may, however, certify that a Bill is essential, and the Bill shall thereupon become law without the assent of both Chambers. But

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when the Governor-General is driven to enact laws in this way copies of these must first be placed on the Table of the House of Commons here. In regard to Provincial Governments, the Act of 1919 contains elaborate provisions for further decentralisation and for the development of the organisation and powers of the Provincial Governments. The provincial subjects have been handed over to the Provincial Governments, subject to general control by the Government of India, and there is a further distinction being made between what we call the "reserved" and the "transferred" subjects. The Governor-General in Council retains unaltered powers of control over the Provincial Governments in regard to "reserved" subjects, but in regard to "transferred" subjects he only interferes in cases where interference is necessary to safeguard central subjects. Transferred subjects are local self-government, public health and sanitation, education, public works, agriculture, fisheries, excise, registration, development of industries, weights and measures, religious and charitable endowments. The Provincial Governments are formed on a plan of dyarchy or dual form of government, by which certain functions are discharged by one body, the Governor in Council, and the other functions by another body, the Governor acting with Ministers. Each is responsible for his own share of the work of administration, and the Governor simply acts as the connecting link. In the case of the transferred subjects, the Governor is guided by the advice of his Ministers, and so there is a certain degree of responsible self-government possible. It may be in time extended. The financial budget is laid before the Legislative Council each year. The Council may refuse assent to a proposed grant, or may reduce the amount, provided (1) that if it relates to a reserved subject the Governor may "restore" the amount reduced: (2), that the Governor in an emergency may authorise expenditure which he certifies to be necessary for the safety or order of the province.

I am sorry to weary the House with the details of the reforms that were passed in 1919, but when we are discussing the breakdown of this very difficult Act—it is agreed that it is not, at any rate, easy working—it is important that I should

say something about the attitude of India towards the Act at the time when it was passed. There is no doubt at all that the attitude of India, almost from the beginning, has been one of extreme suspicion. My noble Friend in another place, when he made a statement earlier in the year, attempted to analyse the causes of this suspicion, and I shall merely refer to them to-night. Some of them have been referred to to-night already. There is, first of all, the unfortunate Amritsar affair. Secondly, I understand that my own distinguished countrymen's gift for vivid phrase led them to believe that the steel frame of the Indian Civil Service was riveted on the shoulders of India for ever. Thirdly, I understand that the certification of the Salt Tax caused a great deal of heart-searching in India last year. There is, of course, the eternal Kenya problem. The attitude first taken up by what we may call the Nationalist party in India was to boycott the thing altogether. They were out, that is to say, to boycott the British courts, the British form of education, and British goods of all kinds. It was really a movement to dewesternise India.

That was the first attitude. In view of that, of course, the Indian Home Rulers took no part in the first elections in 1920. The next move was to abandon the attitude of non-violent non-co-operation, and to go into the Councils and into the Legislative Assembly and to make the Constitution, as they very definitely put it, unworkable from the inside. I do not think that there is any doubt about this, because in October of last year there was a very interesting manifesto issued by the Home Rule party under the signature of Moti Lal Nahru, in which he points out quite clearly that their attitude is to destroy the constitution as outlined in the Act of 1919. I would like to read a paragraph or two of this manifesto, which was issued just before the elections of last year.

"The Swarajist party believes that the guiding motive of the British in governing India is to serve the selfish interests of their own country, and that the so-called reforms are a mere blind to further the said interests under the pretence of granting responsible government to India, the real object being to continue the exploitation of the unlimited resources of the country by giving Indians the pretence of responsible government in India, and denying them the most elementary rights of citizenship."

That was the attitude, rightly or wrongly, taken by this party. When the elections came on, this party achieved a very remarkable victory. The figures for the Assembly are as follow: There were 41 Swarajists returned to the Assembly, seven Independents, two Sikhs, and three Burmans. The result in the Central Provinces is still more striking. Out of a total membership of 70, 54 of whom are elected, 44 Swarajists were returned. In Bengal, out of an Assembly of 140, 111 of whom are elected, 37 Swarajists were returned. Having thus secured a good representation by perfectly constitutional methods, they proceeded to bring their point of view to the notice of the Assembly, and a Motion was moved early this year, to which reference has been made to-night, and was carried. The Motion proposed:

"To summon at an early date a representative round-table conference to recommend, with due regard for the protection of the rights and interests of the important minorities, a scheme of constitution for India, and after dissolving the Central Legislature, to submit the said scheme for approval before a newly-elected Indian Legislature for its approval, and to submit same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a Statute."

That Motion was passed by the Legislative Assembly by 76 votes to 48. At the same time certain Budget demands were turned down or rejected. In the Central Provinces, where, as we can well imagine, the Swarajists are in a stronger position, their action can be shortly described as follows. They have, as the House will remember, 44 members out of 54 elected members. That is to say, they have a permanent majority, and they have made it quite clear that they do not intend to work the constitution, but to drive the Governor to govern by certificate. For example, they refused early this Session to consider seven or eight Bills brought before the Central Provinces Legislature. The Ministers, as a result, resigned after having carried on for three or four months at the request of the Government. The Governor then assumed charge of the transferred subjects and restored the rejected grants for the reserved subjects under Proviso (a), Section 72D of the Act. The interesting question, as far as this House is concerned, is this. Is it true to say that the Government of India Act has broken down completely? On the one hand it appears that the intention of Parliament

in 1919 clearly was that Indians should co-operate with us in working this scheme. So far that has not been achieved, but it is perfectly true to say that, in addition, other provisions were made in the Act of 1919 for contingencies, and all that has happened hitherto is that the powers which have been held in reserve have merely been put into operation.

I think it is also true to say that the Government of India recognise that the Act is not working exactly in the way they would have it work, because everyone would prefer to have the active co-operation of this politically active people in working the reforms, rather than that they should stand aside and merely attempt to destroy, and I venture to suggest that before we can say the Act has actually broken down, it is important that a real generous attempt should be made to work this very difficult legislative machinery. References have been made to the fact that the Government of India, as stated by Sir Malcolm Hailey, are investigating the working of this Act with a view to their removal of any deficiencies which may exist. If the Act is not working smoothly, if there are deficiencies in it as has been suggested, it is obviously the duty of the Government which has to try to administer this machinery to see exactly where the difficulty is and, if possible, by good feeling to get rid of it. Consequently, an investigation into the shortcomings and deficiencies in the Act is being carried out by the Government of India at the present time. I have explained the action which is being taken by the Government of India, with the full concurrence of His Majesty's Government, with a view to investigating the present constitutional situation and determining whether any grounds exist for deciding that the question of further modifications should be considered; and I may add that it appears to His Majesty's Government important, for the purposes of this inquiry, that the views of representative Indian politicians, who have come to the Assembly in a perfectly constitutional way, and who advocate modifications of the Constitution in regard to any practical defects in the provisions of the 1919 Act, should be given full opportunity of constitutional expression and consideration before the recommendations of the Government are finally formulated. It is

[Mr. Richards.]

the desire of His Majesty's Government to arrange, in concert with the Government of India, how best such opportunities may be provided. His Majesty's Government view with grave concern the estrangement between Great Britain and the elected representatives of the Indian people, and we, therefore, desire to establish contact with them in the hope that a way may be found, by a full and frank interchange of views, to establish a lasting peace and enduring co-operation for the well-being both of India and of the Empire as a whole.

Earl WINTERTON: I was not clear, in the hon. Gentleman's otherwise very clear and explicit statement, whether he was referring to those who have announced that they are prepared to co-operate with the Government or to those who have hitherto said they will have no co-operation of any kind. It is a very important distinction.

Mr. RICHARDS: I was referring to those who are prepared to co-operate. It is one of the acknowledged objects of His Majesty's Government, and definitely in accordance with the principles of the party, to assist the Indian people to Dominion self-government. As to the appointment of a Commission, as proposed in the Amendment on the Paper, such a proposal is, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, premature at this moment. As I have already indicated, an inquiry is actually being carried on by the Government of India into this very question.

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER: On a point of Order. I understand that no Amendment has been moved.

Mr. RICHARDS: I am referring to the Amendment on the Paper. Accordingly, the terms of the Amendment on the Paper are, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, not appropriate to the situation at this date, and whether or not it is adopted by the House, it must not be taken as committing the Government to any particular method of dealing with this very difficult problem.

Earl WINTERTON: I find myself in the position of being in as complete disagreement with the speech of the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Hope Simpson) as one Member can be with the speech of another. I am

going to say a word about that speech in a few minutes, but I am doubtful of being able to characterise it in Parliamentary language. Referring to the speech of the hon. Member for Stepney (Mr. Scurr), I am also in complete disagreement, as are, I think, the majority of the House, with the view suggested. I find myself in the unfortunate position of only being in very partial agreement with the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Scottish Universities (Sir H. Craik); and I find myself in the most unfortunate condition, for one who thinks as I do, of being largely in agreement with the speech that has just been delivered by the Under-Secretary of State for India.

In the first place, I think that, without exceeding the bounds of courtesy, I may remark that the Opposition have justified themselves in asking that there might be a Debate which would disclose the intentions of the Government towards India. There has been abundant need for a long time past for a statement of the Government as to how the exceptionally difficult situation is being faced. I should be the last person to underestimate the responsibility of the Secretary of State or Under-Secretary at the present moment, because I have had recent official experience, and I am quite prepared to agree that in such circumstances caution and reticence are to a very large extent a virtue, and should be as much a part of their attitude towards both Houses as that of the representatives of any other Government office, including even the Foreign Office. But I am bound to say that I think that both in the case of the hon. Member and the Noble Lord in another place that caution and reticence have been so unduly extended that these good qualities themselves have been turned into a vice. It is not until to-night that we have had any clear indication at all of the intentions of the Government towards the course of events in India. I think that is quite wrong, and I should like to make a protest, which I think really would be echoed by the whole House, irrespective of party, against the assumption which is growing up in some quarters, especially some Press quarters, that this House as a House is not as much concerned with the affairs in India, or

has as much right to be interested in them, as it had 10 years ago.

One sees the most amazing statements, and although I do not wish to mention individual papers, or quote from them—which would be out of order—I have noticed a tendency, even in such newspapers as the "Times," to suggest that the Government of India and the officials in India are being handicapped both by the control which this House desires to exercise over affairs in India and by the control which, it is said, the Secretary of State and the India Office do exercise over it. It cannot be too much reiterated that under the new system, under the reforms, the Government of India is, admittedly, only very partially responsible to the Assembly, and that the Assembly itself, as has been pointed out, is elected on a very narrow franchise basis. If it is not to be in any respect responsible, through the Secretary of State, to this House, then the Government of India would soon tend to become, what some say it is, a complete autocracy. It should be recognised that the Act provides that there shall be dual responsibility by the Government of India to this House and to the Assembly. Therefore, I say in this transition stage, Parliament should not only take as much interest as it did before but more, and these complaints made in the Press to the effect that any Secretary of State and the India Office exercises an unfair and an undesirable control over the Government of India, is really an absurdity.

I would like to come back to my main theme, and that is the question of the present position of the reforms in India. I find myself, as I have said, only in partial agreement with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scottish Universities (Sir H. Craik), but I should like to pay a tribute to the sincerity and frankness with which he has stated his attitude on the subject of the Government of India Act. It is undoubtedly true that my right hon. Friend and others were amongst the strongest opponents of the India Act when it was brought into operation in 1919, when the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Ormsby-Gore) and myself were supporting the then Government against the attacks made on the Bill.

My right hon. Friend went on to say that the Act, having become a constitu-

tional Act, and he might have added a binding pledge by this House to the people of India, he considered it was his duty, and the duty of all those who at the time disagreed with the Act, to do their best now to see it carried to a successful issue. That is a perfectly correct attitude, but what is the attitude of the party opposite, as represented by the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Hope Simpson)? I always had the idea that the hon. Member was, in principle, a supporter of the India Act, but he stated to-night that his view as that, at the time the Act was passed, he considered it was an experiment, and now the hon. Member for Taunton, apparently, is prepared to destroy the machinery of the Act and substitute something entirely different in its place.

Mr. SIMPSON: I do not think the words which I used bear that construction at all. I suggested that the time had come for a Commission to inquire into the working of the Act to see if it required amendment.

Earl WINTERTON: That is a statement very different to the terms of the Amendment that the hon. Member for Taunton has put on the Paper, which is as follows:

"the failure of the Government of India Act, 1919, in certain of the Provinces of British India, and the increasing divergence between the administrative systems in the Native States and those of British India, considers that immediate steps should be taken to examine these problems, and to this end requests the Government to appoint a Commission with wide terms of reference to inquire into the facts on the spot, to review the working of the reforms, and to report what action, whether legislative or administrative, is now required to carry out the expressed intention of the British Government that the reforms shall constitute a definite step towards fulfilment of the promise of ultimate Dominion self-government within the Empire."

If anybody has ever produced an Amendment more damning an Act than that, I should like to see it. The extraordinary thing about this matter is that this Amendment was to be seconded by the hon. and gallant Member for Oldham (Lieut.-Colonel Sir E. Grigg), who for a very long period of his life has been, and I believe is still, closely associated in a political sense with one of the people who is as much responsible for the Act as anybody in this House, that is, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon

[Earl Winterton.]

Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George). Not only is that right hon. Gentleman not present, but the hon. and gallant Member for Oldham is not here to explain the extraordinary discrepancy between the views of himself and the chief under whom he served so long.

Major Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR: The Noble Lord probably is not aware that there are very strong personal reasons why my hon. and gallant Friend is not here. I think the Noble Lord is putting a very controversial construction, to say the least of it, on this Amendment.

Earl WINTERTON: Of course, if my hon. and gallant Friend tells me that there are personal reasons why the hon. Baronet is not here, I accept that. I think, however—and I assure the House that I am not trying to make a party point of this—that for one of the most distinguished ex-Indian civil servants that we have had in this House, with a fine record of service in India behind him, to come down to the House and speak on the Act which his former colleagues are doing their utmost to work in India in the face of tremendous opposition and misunderstanding—to speak as he did, amid the cheers of the extremists of the Labour party, was something of which he should not be proud. When I speak of extremists, I distinguish between the Government, their immediate supporters, and those who are opposed to the Government on this matter. Of course, it is obvious to anyone that there is the most complete divergence of opinion in the ranks of the Government supporters. We have had a speech by the hon. Member for Mile End (Mr. Scurr), which was very effectively answered by the Under-Secretary.

Having dealt with the speech of the hon. Member for Taunton, which I still think he will regret when he reads it in cold print to-morrow, in view of his previous record on this question, I come to the speech of the Under-Secretary. I shall only occupy a few minutes more of the time of the House, because I have promised the Chancellor of the Duchy that I will give way to him at three minutes to eleven, in order that he may make a personal explanation concerning a statement made by my Noble Friend at an earlier period. As I understand the statement which has been made by the Under-Secretary, it is this. I understand him to say—but the word

“understand” is putting it too mildly and not sufficiently definitely, I am sure, from the Under-Secretary’s speech—that he has made it quite clear to-night, to this House and to India, that he definitely rejects proposals for destroying the existing machinery of the Government of India Act; that he does not contemplate a departure from the hitherto existing policy of successive Governments, of carrying out that Act to the best of his ability and that of his chief and of the Government; and that any form of inquiry which may be set up, whether it be a Committee of this House, or a Committee of the Government of India, will be an inquiry merely into the existing machinery of the Act; that before such a Committee of Inquiry there will be welcomed evidence from those who are interested in seeing the Act worked successfully, but that those who have from the first set their hands—indeed, the whole of their bodies—against this Act being made a success, will not only not be encouraged but will not be allowed to give evidence before that Committee. If that is what the Under-Secretary and the Government propose, there will certainly be no objection taken to it on this side of the House. That it is necessary to have such a Committee at present I am myself not fully persuaded. I am not sure that the Under-Secretary has not allowed himself to be unduly influenced by certain events which have occurred in India. The hon. Gentleman referred, as did the Secretary of State in another place, to such incidents, for example, as Amritsar. I do not want to say much at this length of time on what is admitted on all sides to be a very unhappy incident, but I cannot accept, without much further evidence than has been given by the Under-Secretary or by the Secretary of State, that that incident to-day takes any foremost part in causing the difficulties which have arisen in India. Again the Secretary of State referred to the salt tax as apparently one of the causes of the irritation. Again, so far as my experience and knowledge go, the raising of the Salt Tax last year has had a very small effect in increasing the general difficulties of government in India, and I think those difficulties go far deeper than either of those things. Still, if the Government believe it is necessary to have an inquiry into the

machinery of the Act, if they, unlike the hon. Member for Taunton, are not anxious to scrap that machinery and put something else in its place, if, unlike the hon. Member for Taunton, they are willing to trust the engineers, Indian and British, who are working that machinery at present, I, for one, and most of us on this side of the House, would have no objection, and we welcome the Under-Secretary's very definite statement that it is not proposed to depart from the spirit or letter of the Act, and we welcome the implied rebuke which he has given to some of his hot-headed friends on the benches behind him.

Mr. TOOLE: Is the Noble Lord in order in referring to anyone here as "hot-headed"? If that be so, should I be in order in referring to him as "fat-headed"?

Mr. SPEAKER: When the hon. Member has been longer in the House, he will realise that the Noble Lord is well qualified to speak.

Earl WINTERTON: I accept the compliment with great pleasure. However hot-headed I may be, I hope I am not as thin-skinned as Members of the Labour party. May I address one or two remarks to those same hon. Members—I will not describe them as hot-headed—who sit on the back benches and who have views so much, if I may say so without offence, on the extreme left as regards the situation in India. What is the only real alternative to some such system as you have in India to-day under the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme? I am the last to say that the earnestness of a man like Gandhi, misguided, dangerous and, in some respects, criminal as it is, is to be met merely by sneers and jeers. The House will acquit me of ever having said that, but the philosophy preached by Mr. Gandhi, and largely supported by hon. Members on that side of the House, including the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury), can be met by the logic of indisputable fact. What are those facts? They are, as the Under-Secretary himself said, that there is in India nothing like homogeneity of race. That there are divisions of race, divisions of religion and, above all, there is diversity of aim among Indians themselves. Either you have to support a system of co-operative government such as we have in

India to-day, or else you have to fall back on the complete Swaraj preached by men like Mr. Gandhi and indirectly, at any rate, by those who sit on the benches opposite. There is no real mean between the two extremes.

If the ultimate aim of the Swarajists, and of those who support them in this country, were suddenly to be obtained, and absolute independence reached, how would India meet these difficulties? Would Mahommedan mobs suddenly fraternise with Hindu mobs? Would the causes of offence to Hindus by Mahommedans, such as cow killing, suddenly be tolerated? Would the highest castes by a wave of the hand suddenly embrace the depressed classes in India? Would the Indian leaders of opinion in British India in a flash see the merits of government as practised, for example, in the territory of His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad? I am the last to deny that that Government has many merits, but they are not of the nature that the Indian *intelligentsia* support. The most important question and the hardest for hon. Gentlemen opposite to answer is: Would the stern rigid India of the north suddenly view with benevolence the soft and subtle Indian of Bengal? Would all these racial difficulties, these religious difficulties, be suddenly swept away if you granted absolute Home Rule to-morrow on lines which supporters of the Government urge in every speech they make on the subject? The logical and ultimate end of what they say must mean that.

Again and again we have heard from hon. Members opposite, when speaking on public platforms, that the Labour Government are going to give complete home rule to India. What is our plain duty? [Interruption.] If hon. Gentlemen interrupt me, then the Chancellor of the Duchy will not get an opportunity of making his reply. I ask, in conclusion—and I shall have an affirmative reply from nine-tenths of the House—what is our obvious duty in these admittedly very difficult circumstances? Is it to take the hopeless view of the hon. Member for Taunton, throw up our hands in despair and say everything is lost? Is it to take the view of those who sit above the Gangway, who differ from their own Government, who believe that it is possible by a stroke of the pen to sweep away all the safeguards put in the Act of 1919? If because of discordant cries

[Earl Winterton.]
 from a handful of extremists in India, because of ignorant and fatuous criticism at home, this great Empire, which was capable of all it did in the Great War, were to throw in its hands and say: "We are no longer going to carry on this task of co-operating with Indians in the Government of India," if that is the attitude, it will, indeed, be true to say that we have lost our power of being an Empire-making and an Empire-governing nation. We shall, indeed, cease to merit that title. I say this, and I challenge anyone to deny it, and I am sure that no Member of the Government will, that no better right for this country to be considered the greatest Empire-building organisation that the world has ever seen can be found than in the free willing declaration that was made in 1917, which was carried out in the Act of 1919, and in the face of contumely and misrepresentation is being carried out by the servants of the Crown in India to-day by co-operation with Indians, to help them along the path of self-development so as to become an eventual self-governing unit within the Empire. No better title for this Empire to be called the best Empire-building Empire that has ever existed could be found than in what we did then. I welcome very warmly what, in the circumstances, is the courageous stand which the Under-Secretary and the Government have taken to-night against the action of some of their own supporters behind them (and, I am sorry to say, some Members of the Liberal party) in the direction of destroying the system of government in India.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: I have always been a great admirer of the Noble Lord. I admire not only the ability with which he differs from people but the ability with which he agrees with people. I have never been more overwhelmed by his ability than I have been to-night, because he has shown marked ability in reading into the speech—

Earl WINTERTON: Is this a personal explanation?

Colonel WEDGWOOD: I have admired the ability with which the Noble Lord has read into it things that were never said. I would remind the Noble Lord that if he reads the speech to-morrow, and if he reads the speech delivered by my

dear friend Moti Lal Nahru in the Assembly at Delhi, he will find that Moti Lal Nahru is prepared to co-operate with those who are prepared to co-operate with him.

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE *rose*—[HON. MEMBERS: "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. Member rising to a point of Order?

Mr. WARDLAW-MILNE: Yes. It was distinctly understood in the speech of the Noble Lord that he gave way for three minutes to enable the Chancellor of the Duchy to make a personal explanation.

Colonel WEDGWOOD: If there is anything dishonourable in the action I am taking, the Noble Lord will see to it, and not my hon. Friend. May I ask the Noble Lord the Member for South Battersea (Viscount Curzon), as an old Member of the House, whether he appreciates the value of evidence. He quoted two things, of which he complained, which I said in India. He quoted also something that the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Spoor) had said. One statement was this:

"The British Labour party,"

said Colonel Wedgwood at Allahabad in December, 1920,

"is with the Indian people in their desire for a democratic Swaraj."

We all are, on both sides of the House. There is nothing terrible about that. On another occasion, he said, Colonel Wedgwood added that

"It was immaterial whether it was Home Rule or independence"—

It being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Wednesday, 16th April, 1924.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

INDIA.

On this day four weeks, to call attention to the state of affairs in India, and to move a Resolution.—[*Mr. Mills, on behalf of Mr. Grundy.*]

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

POTABLE SPIRITS (IMPORTS).

Mr. MILLAR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the quantity

and value in pounds sterling of potable spirits imported into India during the year 1922-23, the amount of revenue derived therefrom, and the countries from which the spirits were exported?

Mr. RICHARDS: The following statement gives the information asked for:

IMPORTS into India during 1922-23 of potable spirits, distinguishing countries of origin.

(Note.—Values are shown in sterling at the rate of 1s. 4d. to the rupee.)

Articles and Countries of Origin.	Quantity in Gallons.	Value.
<i>Brandy—</i>		£
United Kingdom ...	11,090	21,232
France ...	206,558	228,972
Germany ...	41,524	24,295
Java ...	12,487	1,575
Netherlands... ..	1,069	823
Other Countries ...	1,300	1,632
Total ...	274,028	278,529
<i>Gin—</i>		
United Kingdom ...	68,526	60,672
Netherlands... ..	8,050	5,260
Other Countries ...	1,235	839
Total ...	77,811	66,771
<i>Liqueurs—</i>		
United Kingdom ...	3,614	7,370
Denmark ...	1,015	1,647
France ...	5,683	9,627
Other Countries ...	2,330	3,725
Total ...	12,642	22,369
<i>Rum—</i>		
United Kingdom ...	5,510	4,136
Germany ...	6,568	3,243
Java ...	124,719	11,605
Other Countries ...	737	583
Total ...	137,534	19,567

Articles and Countries of Origin.	Quantity in Gallons.	Value.
<i>Whisky—</i>		
United Kingdom ...	579,479	786,220
Germany ...	13,162	7,190
Other Countries ...	2,353	2,111
Total ...	594,994	795,521
<i>Other Potable Spirit—</i>		
United Kingdom ...	10,528	39,509
Ceylon ...	18,584	3,426
Hong Kong... ..	12,034	5,134
China (exclusive of Hong Kong and Hacao).	12,040	5,527
Java ...	17,019	1,708
Other Countries ...	4,133	5,143
Total ...	74,338	60,447
Grand Total, Potable Spirit.	1,171,347	1,243,204

Net revenue derived from import of Spirits and Liquors in 1922-23 = Rs. 2,07,58,246 (at 1s. 4d. to the rupee = £1,383,880).

EXCISE REVENUE.

Mr. MILLAR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will state in pounds sterling the net Excise revenue of India for the years 1920-21, 1921-22, and 1922-23, respectively; what was the recorded consumption of country spirits in each of those years in Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Sind, Bihar and Orissa, the United Provinces, the Punjab, the Central Provinces and Berar, Assam, and Burma, respectively; and what was the percentage of Excise revenue as compared with the total revenue accruing to the Provincial Government in each case for the year 1922-23?

Mr. RICHARDS: The following statement gives the information desired:

NET EXCISE REVENUE IN INDIA (Government of India and Provincial Governments), i.e., Gross Receipts less refunds and compensations.

	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Net Revenue	20,29,39,192	17,18,61,914	18,55,21,656
Less compensations... ..	15,10,330	14,81,274	12,91,642
Rs.	20,14,28,862	17,03,80,640	18,42,30,014
At 15 Rs. = £ (the present approximate rate of exchange).	£13,428,591	£11,358,709	£12,282,001

RECORDED CONSUMPTION OF COUNTRY SPIRITS.*

	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.
	Proof gallons.	Proof gallons.	Proof gallons.
Bengal	766,572	599,415	593,356
Madras	1,723,868	1,644,417	1,575,439
Bombay	2,592,174	2,085,774	1,770,715
Sind	222,375	139,706	137,290
Bihar and Orissa	1,304,671	1,079,281	1,241,280
United Provinces	1,138,030	576,881	473,077
Punjab	514,350	300,767	188,000
Central Provinces and Berar	1,011,849	560,125	314,819†
Assam	304,572	152,349	178,966
Burma	132,883	146,597	151,689

* Excluding outstill areas for which statistics of consumption are not available.

† Figures for nine months, April-December, 1922. The corresponding figure for the period April-December, 1921, was 357,661.

PERCENTAGE OF EXCISE REVENUE AS COMPARED WITH TOTAL REVENUE ACCRUING TO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS, 1922-23.

Province.	Revenue of Provincial Governments, 1922-23.	Net Excise Revenue of Provincial Governments, 1922-23.	Percentage of Col. 3 to Col. 2.
1.	2.	3.	4.
	Rs. lakhs.	Rs. lakhs.	
Madras	1,257·8	488·7	38·9
Bombay (including Sind)	1,417·2	412·8	29·1
Bengal	985·0	200·1	20·3
United Provinces	1,006·0	141·1	14·0
Punjab	827·9	102·7	12·4
Burma	886·1	111·6	12·6
Bihar and Orissa	494·1	154·0	31·2
Central Provinces and Berar	515·3	125·7	24·4
Assam	184·4	54·1	29·3

Tuesday, 29th April, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SIKH GURDWARAS AND SHRINES.

40. **Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the terms of reference of the Committee, over which Sir William Birdwood has been appointed as Chairman, which is to inquire into the religious grievances of the Sikhs?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The summary of the terms of reference is as follows:

"To ascertain the wishes of those competent to advise, and to report on the

principles on which measures might now be framed for dealing with the administration and management of Sikh Gurdwaras and Shrines; also to report as to the best mode of dealing with the question of *kirpans*."

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD BURY: Will the Committee go into this question of religious grievances?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

Thursday, 1st May, 1924.

BILL REPORTED

Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Bill [*Lords*].

Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Monday, 5th May, 1924.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Bombay, Baroda, and Central India
Railway Bill [*Lords*],

Not amended, considered; to be read
the Third time.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS (DELIVERY).

1. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that on the 25th February, 1924, Mr. P. S. R. Anjaneyulu, for the Navayuga publishing house, wrote to the Director-General of Telegraphs and Posts complaining of the delay in the delivery of foreign mails addressed to that firm and also complaining of the censorship thus imposed, which the firm states has inflicted monetary loss upon them; that the papers thus delayed, censored, or undelivered include the following, amongst many others: the "Crusader," the "Unity," the "Nation," the "Daily Herald," the "Saturday Herald," the "Manchester Guardian Weekly," the "Living Age," the "Freeman," the "New Russia," the "Outlook," the "New Majority," and the "Islamic Review"; and if he will take steps to put an end to either the examination or censorship of newspapers in India?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): My Noble Friend has written to make inquiries regarding the alleged examination of the mails of the person named, and will let my hon. Friend have the reply as soon as it is received.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Is it a fact, as stated, that these papers are not allowed to go through?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have said there is no censorship.

Sir LEONARD LYLE: Will the hon. Gentleman suggest to these publishing houses that if they import really respectable papers, such as the "Morning Post,"

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: Will the hon. Gentleman see to it that the discretion of the Government of India in prohibiting the entry of papers into India is not put a stop to in any way?

BRITISH TROOPS (DUTIES ON COMFORTS).

2. **Captain Viscount CURZON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that duty at the rate of 15 per cent. is levied upon cakes and puddings consigned from England to members of His Majesty's forces stationed in India, and a duty of 75 per cent. is levied upon cigarettes; that the imposition of these taxes constitutes a great hardship; and whether something can be done to secure some relief from these duties?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The ordinary duties are levied on goods consigned to members of His Majesty's Forces stationed in India, and the Government of India see no reason to change this practice.

Viscount CURZON: Could not the hon. Gentleman again refer the matter to the Government of India to see whether this small concession to our forces, who very often serve under hard conditions on the frontier, could not be made?

Mr. RICHARDS: The question has been referred to them several times.

Captain WEDGWOOD BENN: How is it a hardship to the people in India unless the consumer pays the tax?

LIEUTENANT CLENDINING.

3. **Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has received the reply from the Government of India as to the treatment of Lieutenant Clendining?

Mr. RICHARDS: The reply has been received from the Government of India, and is being communicated to the War Office.

PLAGUE (PUNJAB).

4. **Mr. MILNE** asked the Under-Secretary for State for India if he will give the House any further information regarding the outbreak of plague in the Punjab?

Mr. RICHARDS: With my hon. Friend's permission, I will circulate the reply, which is somewhat long, in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Mr. MILNE: Are the conditions better or worse?

Mr. RICHARDS: They are rather better.

Following is the reply:

The Government of India have reported that 11 districts out of the 29 in the Punjab are infected, and that the mortality from the 1st January to the end of March is estimated at 38,000, including 25,000 deaths in March. Figures for the first two weeks of April have not yet been received, but in the week ending 19th April there were 12,393 deaths. The epidemic is less severe than in 1902, 1904, 1905, 1907 and 1915, but has assumed alarming proportions. The measures taken are chiefly directed towards inoculation and disinfection. Funds have been provided for additional staff in each infected district and for the adequate supply of plague vaccine. A vigorous inoculation campaign has been undertaken and resulted in 30,000 inoculations weekly for a considerable period. The total number of inoculations to the 19th April was over 236,000, which is a greater number than in any previous year since 1903. Conditions will favour a decline of the epidemic in the present month. A decline had set in in the Southern Punjab by the middle of April.

PRISONERS (TREATMENT).

5. Mr. MAXTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that political prisoners in the Benares Gaol, United Provinces, are asked to work a mill for extracting mustard oil, and that they are blindfolded while yoked to these mills; whether any protest against such treatment was made in India; and what orders have been passed, if any, on such protests?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information as to the particular case referred to, but the whole question of the treatment of prisoners included in what is known as the Special Division was very fully considered last year by the Governments in India and the Secretary of State in the light of the Indian Gaols Committee

Report, and if the prisoners in question came under the above category, they are no doubt being treated in accordance with the principles laid down.

Mr. LANSBURY: Will my hon. Friend make inquiries as to whether the facts are as stated in the question?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes. If my hon. Friend will give me particulars, I will.

LEGISLATIVE RULES.

6. Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the recent changes in the Legislative Rules of the Government of India were under contemplation and were being discussed with the India Office for the last two years, he will say whether any attempt was made to consult the wishes of the Indian Legislative Assembly during that period regarding the changes proposed, whether the Standing Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament was consulted about the contemplated changes; whether the decision was taken as a result of the changed personnel of the Indian Legislative Assembly and whether he will consider the desirability of getting the views of the Indian Legislature before any further changes in the Rules are made?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first three parts of the question is in the negative. As regards the fourth part, the Indian Legislature is expressly debarred by Statute from power to alter these Rules, but the desirability of consulting that body before changes are made in these and other Statutory Rules is always considered when the proposed change could suitably be made the subject of such consultation.

TRADE UNIONISTS (MATUNGA WORKSHOPS).

8. Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the financial connection between the Government of India and the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, he is in a position to give any information as to the victimisation of union men at the Matunga workshops?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no knowledge of any such victimisation. If my hon. Friend can refer to a particular case, my Noble Friend will be prepared to have an inquiry made.

MILITARY SCHOOLS.

9. **Mr. MORRISON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has received any complaints as to the standard of education provided in the military schools in India; whether he is aware that a large number of parents prefer to send their children to outside schools; and whether he will have inquiries made into this matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not aware of dissatisfaction on this matter, but if the hon. Member will supply me with any more specific information, I will have inquiries made.

GOVERNMENT SERVANTS (GRIEVANCES).

10. **Mr. MAXTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Indian servants of the Government of India are debarred from bringing their grievances to the notice of non-official members, whether of the Central or Provincial Legislatures, apart from such things as may be covered by the Official Secrets Act; and whether the Government of the United Provinces have taken any steps on the Resolution regarding this matter, which was passed by the United Provinces Council on 27th February last?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Secretary of State for India is not aware of any rule prohibiting any servant of the Government of India from bringing his grievances to the notice of non-official members of the Central or Provincial Legislatures, provided that in so doing he does not infringe Rule 17 of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules which prohibit communication to non-official persons without authority of documents or information which have come into his possession in the course of his official duties. With regard to the second part of the question I have no information.

INDIAN SUBJECTS (UNITED STATES).

7. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Lalitpur municipality, in Northern India, has recently refused to give any concessions to an American on the ground that the United States of America has refused to naturalise a

Hindu who had gone there; whether the Secretary of State has any information about the reasons given by the United States for discriminating against Indians; whether any steps have been taken to get this discriminating treatment rectified; and whether any representations have been received from the Government of India about this matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. The refusal of the United States Government to naturalise Indians is due to a ruling of the Supreme Court that Indians are ineligible for United States citizenship. Representations have been made by His Majesty's Government to the Government of the United States with a view to alleviating hardships resulting from this ruling. The Government of India and the Secretary of State have been in correspondence on this subject, and the Government of India have expressed their appreciation of the action taken by His Majesty's Government.

Mr. SIMPSON: Can the hon. Gentleman see his way to get these facts published in India, where there is much bitterness in regard to these American exclusions?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will see what can be done.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.**MURDER OF BRITISH OFFICERS.**

Captain TERRELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he will state the number of British officers who have since November, 1921, been murdered in Baluchistan; how many of the culprits have been caught in each case; and whether any penalty has been inflicted on any of them?

Mr. RICHARDS: Two British officers have been murdered, Captain Baker Jones in September, 1923, and Major Finnis in November, 1923. One of the two men supposed to have been concerned in the former case was arrested by the Afghan authorities and is understood to have been deported to Afghan Turkestan. In the case of Major Finnis two out of six tribesmen concerned have been captured,

and sentenced after trial under tribal procedure to 14 years' imprisonment—the maximum penalty admissible.

Tuesday, 6th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BRITISH ARMY.

MARRIED SOLDIERS, INDIA (ALLOWANCES)

13. **Mr. R. MORRISON** asked the Secretary of State for War whether any inquiries have recently been made as to the conditions of family allowances to married soldiers serving in India as compared with services either at home or in any other part of the Empire; and what conclusions, if any, have been arrived at?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): This matter was settled at the end of 1921 after extensive inquiry. Only one point of detail has been under consideration since. As regards the last part of the question, I will, with the hon. Member's permission, circulate the information in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the information promised:

The marriage allowances scheme for British soldiers which was introduced from the 4th October, 1920, was applied to soldiers serving regimentally in India with effect from that date.

On its introduction in India the soldier received the British rates of marriage allowance converted into rupees at the rate of Rs.10 = £1, plus an Indian allowance of 20 per cent. This was practically the equivalent of the British rate converted at the current rate of exchange.

In 1921, however, the Government of India received evidence which showed that the War Office system of marriage allowance, under which at Colonial stations certain rations were admissible for the family and at all stations a deduction was made for rent of quarters, was unsuited to Indian conditions, and they were informed that British soldiers in India would prefer to receive an all-round allowance fixed in rupees without rations and without deduction for rent.

An extensive inquiry was accordingly instituted amongst Officers Commanding British units in India and others in a position to know, and, as a result, towards the end of 1921, the Government of India recommended that the following consolidated rupee rates should be given in India in preference to British rates converted:

	Per mensem.
	Rs.
For a wife only ...	30
For wife and 1 child ...	40
For wife and 2 children ...	50
For wife and 3 children ...	60
For each additional child ...	5

With these rates no rations for the family were to be admissible and no deductions were to be made for rent of quarters.

The recommendations of the Government of India were accepted by the Secretary of State for India, who sanctioned the introduction of the new rates as from the 1st January, 1922. They are still in force and appear to be satisfactory. They compare with the present British rates as follows:

	A week.
	s. d.
Wife only ...	7 0
Wife and 1 child ...	13 6
Wife and 2 children ...	18 0
Wife and 3 children ...	20 0
Wife and 4 children ...	22 0
Wife and 5 children ...	23 6
Wife and 6 children ...	25 0
For each additional child...	1 0

With these rates 1s. a day is deducted for rent when quarters are provided, and, in Colonial stations only, a half ration is issued for the wife and a quarter ration for each child. The Indian rates, therefore, generally compare favourably with the British.

LIEUTENANT C. H. CLENDINING.

15. **Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he can explain why Lieutenant C. H. Clendining, 3rd battalion Royal Irish Rifles, who was detained as an alleged mental case at the station hospital, Cawnpore, during September, 1917, was permitted to retain in his possession a sporting gun, revolver and ammunition, and to leave the hospital to

go out shooting in the jungle; and if he is aware that this officer was placed in hospital without being examined by any medical officer?

Mr. WALSH: With regard to the first part of the question, I have at present no information before me. With regard to the latter part, I understand from Lieutenant Clendining's own account that he was ordered to hospital by the senior medical officer, after examination. As I informed the hon. Member for Dartford on 4th March last, the Army Council are awaiting the report of the Government of India before investigating the case in accordance with the procedure laid down in Section 42 of the Army Act for dealing with the complaint of any officer who considers himself wronged. I understand that the report in question has just been received by the India Office and is being communicated to the War Office.

Mr. LANSBURY: Will the hon. Gentleman assure the House that there will be no undue delay in settling this case which has been going on now for many years?

Mr. WALSH: The Report has just this morning reached the War Office. In accordance with the Army Act I will investigate it myself as quickly as possible.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

OFFICERS KILLED IN INDIA (DEATH DUTY).

Sir J. MARRIOTT asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the circumstances under which Major Fearnley Anderson and Major Norman C. Ord, both of the Seaforth Highlanders, were killed by enemy tribesmen on the North-West frontier of India on 8th April, 1923; and whether, in view of those circumstances, it is proposed to remit the death duties applicable in the case of their respective estates?

Mr. GRAHAM: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative, but I regret that I am not prepared to recommend an alteration of the law with a view to the remissions proposed in the second part of the question.

Wednesday, 7th May, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

OPIUM TRAFFIC

Duchess of ATHOLL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what revenue was derived by the Government of India in the last financial year from the production and sale of opium and opium products, including all dues levied in connection therewith; and what was the expenditure on the control of the production and sale and the collection of dues?

Mr. RICHARDS: The latest figures are for the year 1922-1923. In that year the revenue of the Government of India and Provincial Governments from the production and sale of opium was Rs.6,41,00,463, and from the sale of other drugs, Rs.51,698: the expenditure of the Government of India on the production of opium and its control was Rs.1,86,60,643: figures for the expenditure and control of distribution and collection of dues are not available, as these are included in the general charges for the collection of excise revenue; these amounted to Rs.1,28,79,921.

Thursday, 8th May, 1924.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway Bill [*Lords*],.

Read the Third time, and passed, without Amendment.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

LEAFIELD WIRELESS STATION.

65. **Mr. STURROCK** asked the Postmaster-General if the Leaffield wireless telegraph services to India have been closed down; and, if so, for what reason?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Hartshorn): Prior to the 1st May, the Leaffield wireless station was reserved for a short period daily for the transmission of urgent Press telegrams to India on

[Mr. Hartshorn.]

behalf of certain newspapers and news agencies. This service, which occupied a time totally incommensurate with its value to the Post Office or the senders, has lately fallen into disuse and has accordingly been suspended.

SUPPLY.

[7TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. JAMES BROWN in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1924-25.

NAVAL ARMAMENTS.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,975,500, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Naval Armaments, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1925."

Viscount CURZON: The only other item which I would like to draw attention to is on page 133, Sub-head M. I see a contribution from the Government of India on account of His Majesty's ships in Indian waters. This raises a very important subject. It raises the whole question of Indian defence. The defence of Indian waters has always been the subject of contention, one might almost say, between the Government of this country and the Government of India. We have got in Indian waters a force known as the Royal Indian Marine. It includes some of the finest officers and sailors, but this force has been, shall we say, under a cloud. I do not know what the policy of the Government is. I did not know what the policy of the last Government or the Government before was with regard to the Royal Indian Marine, nor do I know the exact policy of these Governments or of the present Government with regard to the apportionment of labour expenditure as between this country and India, but I would point out that the Royal Indian Marine is organised not exactly as a department of the Navy, as it should be.

If it were to be properly arranged it should be under the Commander-in-Chief on the East India Station, but it is not. It is under an officer under the

direct command of the General Officer Commanding the Indian Troops. I believe that in peace time it is a purely civilian service, but in war time it at once discharges military duties automatically. Under present conditions it is practically nobody's child. The Navy are not interested in it because it is not directly under the Admiralty, and the Army are not very much interested in it. Could the Admiralty not come to an arrangement with the Government of India in respect of the Royal Indian Marine and Indian defence generally? I am sure that the sum of £100,000 a year is not a proper contribution from India towards the great burden of the naval defence of the Indian Empire. We hear a great deal of the demand for Swaraj, Home Rule, for India, but we do not hear very much from the Swaraj party as to what they would do in respect of the defence of India if the British forces were removed from India and from Indian waters to-morrow. This country has always made itself responsible for the defence of Indian waters, and quite rightly, but the whole question of the relative apportionment of the burden of Imperial defence should be gone into, and the Government should endeavour to evolve a policy whereby the exact sum for which every Dominion would be responsible should be well known and should be laid down for the information, not only of that Dominion, but of this country, so that we might all know what we are respectively to pay in respect of our Imperial obligations. I submit also that the present Board of Admiralty should come to some definite decision with regard to the Royal Indian Marine, the present—

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must understand that this is an Appropriation-in-Aid, and that we cannot discuss the policy of the services in respect of which the saving is made. We are only discussing the amount of the appropriation.

Viscount CURZON: My difficulty is that we do not know whether the Royal Indian Marine represents a portion of this Appropriation-in-Aid or whether this Appropriation-in-Aid is something in addition to the Royal Indian Marine. We might have a declaration from the Government in regard to their policy in general in Indian waters and some sort

of intimation as to whether any portion of the £100,000 is represented by the Royal Indian Marine or whether it is entirely additional to it. If this Appropriation-in-Aid is all that India pays towards the naval obligations which we undertake, what proportion does it represent of the total expenditure upon the East India Squadron? I do not think that many hon. Members appreciate the enormous magnitude of the burden which this country alone has to bear in respect of the naval defence of East India waters. and £100,000 does not fairly represent the value of the services rendered by the Royal Navy in respect of India.

Mr. AMMON: That brings me to the point the Noble Lord raised with regard to the Indian Marine. He will see on pages 8 and 9 of the Estimates a statement as to India's contribution towards naval expenditure. The contribution is £100,000 out of a cost of some £2,000,000 or £3,000,000. I think the Committee should know that the Indian Government are at present considering a scheme of reorganisation of the Royal Indian Marine on a combatant basis, and until the Indian Government have decided whether or not to adopt these proposals which were drawn up by the late Director of the Royal Indian Marine, no progress regarding naval co-operation can be made.

Major BURNIE: Do I understand that it is proposed to reorganise the Royal Indian Marines as a combatant corps?

Mr. AMMON: No, not quite that. What I did say was that the Indian Government are at present considering a scheme in that connection, and that until we get the Report from the Indian Government with regard to the matter we are unable to make any alteration as to naval co-operation.

Major BURNIE: I have always understood that the Royal Indian Marines, apart from transport duties, act in India in a similar capacity to the Board of Trade surveyors in this country. Their work is purely civil and connected with the merchant shipping in India, and it seems to me a very bad principle to introduce an armed corps to inspect the merchant shipping in India.

Mr. AMMON: I gather that the line of development is to raise the Royal Indian

Marine on different lines from those which have hitherto obtained, and to do other work. That is the point which is now being considered by the Indian Government, whose Report we are awaiting.

Monday, 12th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE.

1. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering that Brahmmins have hitherto been nominated to represent Indian labour at the International Labour Conference at Geneva, the Secretary of State will now consult the Government of India, with a view to the appointment of members of the backward and working-classes of India to represent labour at the next conference?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): As the hon. and gallant Member is aware, the discretion of Government in nominating the workers' delegate at the International Labour Conference is not unfettered, as under Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles the delegate must be chosen in agreement with the organisations most representative of the workers, if such organisations exist. In India, before a nomination is made representative organisations are consulted. As a matter of fact, however, the workers of India were represented by non-Brahmins in 1920 and 1923, and this will also be the case at this year's Conference. In 1919, 1921 and 1922 the workers' delegate was Mr. Joshi, of the Servants of India Society.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: May I ask whether the workers' organisations in India are, for the most part, considered illegal by the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: No.

Sir C. YATE: Who is representing them this year?

Mr. RICHARDS: Joseph Baptista.

Sir C. YATE: Where does he come from? Is it Bombay?

Mr. RICHARDS: Bombay, I think.

Sir C. YATE: What nationality?

IRON AND STEEL GOODS (IMPORTS).

2. **Sir FREDRIC WISE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the tonnage of iron and steel goods imported into India for the year ending 31st March, 1924, and, of this total, what percentage was British?

Mr. RICHARDS: As the reply is somewhat long, I will, with the hon. Member's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Sir F. WISE: Will the hon. Gentleman state what percentage was British?

Mr. RICHARDS: From the British Empire, 58 per cent.

Following is the reply:

Figures for the year ending 31st March, 1924, are not yet available. The following figures give the tonnage of imports, private and Government, into India during the year 1922-23 of iron and steel, including all the goods classed as "iron and steel goods" in the trade return except iron ore and pig iron, and including also the following goods classed in the trade return as "railway materials," namely, rails, chairs, fishplates, sleepers and keys of iron or steel, and bridgework:

	Tons.	Percentage.
From British Empire (almost exclusively United Kingdom).	549,064	58·3%
From Foreign Countries	392,799	41·7%
Total ...	941,863	100·00%

These figures do not include particulars of iron and steel goods included in the trade returns under such heads as hardware, cutlery, machinery, locomotive engines and tenders, carriages, wagons, etc. The returns do not separately distinguish iron and steel goods under these heads; the published statistics, moreover, relate only to value of imports, not quantity.

ROADS, NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER.

3. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the repeated murders that have taken place on the North-Western frontier of India, and of the satisfactory results that have occurred from the making of a good motor road joining the Tochi valley with the Takki Zam and the establishment of a cantonment at Razmak, he will see his way to run a road through Tirah from Thal to some point on the Peshawar-Landikotal road *via* Khanki-Pazar and the Bara River valley and to establish a permanent cantonment at Khanki-Bazar as has already been done at Razmak?

Mr. RICHARDS: I appreciate the hon. and gallant Member's suggestion, but there is no necessity for the construction of the road through Tirah, where the conditions that prevail are quite different from those prevailing in Waziristan, and permit of control over the tribes in this region being exercised from British territory.

Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that there is no more civilising influence than the making of roads in tribal countries, and that if he wants to avoid these murders in the future, this is the only way to do it?

Mr. RICHARDS: That may be, but the position in the two cases is not analogous.

TAXATION.

6. **Mr. SNELL** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any steps have been taken to carry out the recommendations made by the Joint Select Committee of Parliament, in paragraph 11 of their Report in 1919, relating to the levy of certain classes of taxation in India by executive action without, in some cases, any statutory limitation of the rates and in other cases any adequate prescription by Statute of the method of assessment; whether the same Committee's recommendation that the imposition of new burdens should be gradually brought more within the purview of the legislatures has been acted upon in any way in any part of India; and whether there have been public protests in any part of India against the impositions of additional burdens without the sanction of the Legislative Council concerned?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of Madras recently introduced a Bill in their Legislative Council on the lines of these recommendations of the Joint Select Committee, but it has been rejected. No such Bill has yet been introduced in any other province. I have no information of public protests of the kind mentioned at the end of the question. The Government of India will be asked for a report.

ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH.

7. **Mr. SNELL** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, as a result of the capitation grant, any contribution, direct or indirect, is made by India to the maintenance of the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich; if so, what is the amount of this contribution during the last three years; whether there is any order made by the War Office or by the India Office which excludes an Indian from joining this academy; and whether the whole question of the admission of Indians to these institutions will be taken up with the War Office for reconsideration?

Mr. RICHARDS: India contributes indirectly to the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, through the capitation payments, but it is impossible to state the amount. This institution trains exclusively for the British Service, for which Indians are not eligible. The present policy as regards the Indian Army is to train Indians for commissioned service in infantry and cavalry, and until sufficient time has elapsed to enable the authorities to judge of the success of the present policy, it is not proposed to consider the question of their training for other arms.

MEDICAL SERVICES.

8. **Mr. SNELL** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the recommendations of the Medical Services Committee were forwarded by the Government of India to the Secretary of State for decision some two years ago; that no decision has yet been given by the Secretary of State for India, especially about the transfer of certain appointments ordinarily held by the Indian Medical Service officers to the provincial medical services in the various provinces; that the question regarding medical research and the reduction of the

military assistant surgeons and sub-assistant surgeons, forming part of the recommendations, is still undecided; and whether, in view of the protests made lately in the Indian Legislative Assembly, he will undertake to expedite his decision?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will, with the hon. Member's permission, circulate the reply, which is somewhat long, in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Lieut.-Colonel FREMANTLE: May I ask whether the hon. Gentleman considers that this delay is not seriously prejudicing the recruitment for this most important service?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like to remind the hon. and gallant Gentleman that this question was recently considered by the Lee Commission.

Following is the reply:

It has been found impossible to adopt the fundamental proposal of the Medical Services Committee—i.e., the creation of a single medical service in India. I am sending the hon. Member a copy of a Paper showing the extent to which civil posts are now reserved for Indian Medical Service Officers in the provinces. With the addition of posts under the Central Government these number 333 as compared with 380 recommended for reservation by the Committee and 422 before the War. In the interests of economy the research service has been reduced to a skeleton cadre of six posts, all held by Indian Medical Service officers. In the case of military assistant surgeons no question of reservation arises and the provincial authorities are, I believe, in some cases effecting reductions. In regard to sub-assistant surgeons, I am not clear what information the hon. Member desires.

CAWNPORE DISTURBANCE.

9. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether an official inquiry will be held into the firing of six volleys on a crowd outside a cotton mill at Cawnpore, on 4th April, causing three deaths and many injuries?

Mr. RICHARDS: An official inquiry has been made by the district magistrate, and a summary of the report made by him appeared in the London Press on the 25th

[Mr. Richards.]

April. We have not yet received a copy of the report officially, but I will let my hon. Friend know when it arrives.

PANDIT JAGDAMBA PRASAD

10. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that Pandit Jagdamba Prasad is a political prisoner in Benares Gaol, United Provinces, and that the pandit has been compelled to drive an oil mill for extracting mustard oil, and that he was blindfolded while doing so; whether such work is usually done by bullocks; and whether an inquiry will be made into the whole matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information as to the individual case, but will inquire. The working of an oil press is an authorised form of hard labour in Indian gaols.

Mr. SCURR: Is the hon. Member aware that information of this is contained in the report of the United Provinces Legislative Council, copies of which are in the India Office library?

Captain Viscount CURZON: On a point of Order. I have desired many times to put questions relating to political prisoners in India, and I have been informed that is a matter for the Government of India, and that I could not put them on the Paper. May I ask, therefore, whether this question is in order, according to that rule?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question has already been answered. My attention had not been called to it, but I will look into the matter before further questions are put down.

LAND CESS, BOMBAY.

11. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, despite a resolution passed by the Bombay Legislative Council that the land cess for the Sangola Taluka, in Sholapur district, should not be raised, and in spite of the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee of 1919 that such taxes should not be increased without the consent of the Council, agriculturists are being compelled, under penalty of land forfeiture, to agree to pay

the increased cess, and that where the agriculturists have refused to pay their bullocks and implements have been attached; and whether he will see that the wishes of the Bombay Legislative Council and the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee are carried out?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not received any information regarding the events brought to notice by my hon. Friend. The Government of India will be asked for a report.

PROVINCE OF THE BERARS.

12. **Mr. LINFIELD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the claim of the Nizam of Hyderabad for the rendition of the province of the Berars, which has been before the Government of India for some months, has been dealt with, or whether a committee will be appointed by the Secretary of State on which all parties to the dispute, including the Beraris, will be represented?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Secretary of State is not at present in a position to state what action has been taken upon the letter addressed to the Viceroy, nor is he prepared to state what action he himself will take in the event of this matter being brought before him.

MARRIED ARMY OFFICERS (PAY).

13. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the calculations supplied to him, showing the reduction of pay inflicted on married officers serving in India, had been verified and what is the exact disparity between the home and Indian rates of pay, which is admitted in the case of each of these married officers?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have had the hon. and gallant Member's calculations verified as far as possible. In certain respects the rates do not admit of exact comparison, and the degree of disparity fluctuates with the exchange. At the approximate current rate of 1s. 5d. to the rupee, and after the deduction of British and Indian Income Tax, respectively, the comparison between married British Service officers at home and in India is as stated in the table which I am circulating in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the table:

Comparison of pay per mensem of married British Service Officers at home and in India.

	British pay and allowances converted at 1s. 5d. less Income Tax.	Indian pay less income Tax.	Superiority of Indian over British pay.
	Rs. as.	Rs. as.	Rs. as.
Captain	726 9	726 9	—
Captain after 15 years (2 children)	783 3	810 3	27 0
Major (2 children)	888 11	905 8	16 13
Major after 5 years (2 children) ...	982 14	1,000 13	17 15
Major (senior) (2 children) ...	1,000 0	1,048 7	48 7
Lt.-Colonel in command (2 children)	1,333 13	1,525 0	191 3

KENYA.

ASIATICS (SEGREGATION)

39. **Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that segregation of Asiatics still prevails in the Government railways and steamers in Kenya Colony; that separate accommodation is reserved for persons of special races; and that waiting rooms, refreshment rooms, and lavatories are not open to all travellers irrespective of race; and whether steps will be taken to see that equal facilities are provided for travellers of whatever nationality who pay the same fare?

The **SECRETARY of STATE** for the **COLONIES (Mr. Thomas)**: Separate accommodation is provided in some of the matters mentioned by the hon. and gallant Member, but in such cases every effort is being made to ensure that equal facilities are available for persons who pay the same fare.

INDIAN SUBJECTS (POLL TAX).

40. **Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Indian residents in Kenya Colony are refusing to pay the Poll Tax as a protest against communal franchise; whether any, and, if so, how many, such residents have been prosecuted; in how many cases the defaulters have been imprisoned; and whether in any case a sentence of imprisonment has been passed without preliminary attempts to recover the arrears by distress and sale?

Mr. THOMAS: A number of Indians in Kenya have refused to pay the Poll Tax as a protest against the white paper

policy. The Poll Tax ordinance provides that persons defaulting shall be imprisoned for a term not exceeding six weeks or until payment is made if earlier, provided the magistrate is satisfied that the defaulter has the means to pay and that his default is intentional. I am not in possession of particulars of the number of Indians who have been imprisoned, but the law is being enforced impartially on defaulters of all races.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

GOVERNMENT SERVANTS (PAY).

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that a circular was issued authorising an advance of pay to Government servants in India to cover the passage money of those who wished to make a voyage to England; and whether, seeing that this advance has been refused to Government servants who are Asiatics, he will take up this matter with the Government of India with a view to abolishing such discrimination between members of different races in the employ of the same Government?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware of the orders referred to. The concession was limited to Government servants of non-Asiatic domicile, as Indians, who are serving in their own country, are not under the same necessity of taking leave

in Europe. That being the case, I cannot admit that the discrimination is unreasonable.

ARMY OFFICERS' PENSIONS.

Mr. MURROUGH WILSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to reduce the pensions of ex-officers of the Indian Army as and from the 1st July next; and, if so, by what amount?

Mr. RICHARDS: The question has been referred to the Government of India, and, pending the receipt of their reply, I am not in a position to make a statement on the subject.

Tuesday, 13th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

EXPORTS.

10. Mr. WADDINGTON asked the President of the Board of Trade the values of the exports from India in 1913, and the proportion of such exports to Russia and Australia, respectively, and the corresponding figures for 1923?

Mr. WEBB: The total value of Indian merchandise exported by sea from British India on private account was approximately £162,801,000 in the year ended 31st March, 1914. This amount includes merchandise valued at £1,636,000, or 1·0 per cent., exported to Russia and £2,729,000, or 1·7 per cent., to Australia. The latest period of 12 months for which figures are at present available is that ended 29th February, 1924. During this period the total exports by sea to all countries were valued at £226,428,000, those to Russia being valued at £1,752, a negligible percentage of the total, and those to Australia and New Zealand together (separate figures for these countries not being available) at £4,567,000, or 2·0 per cent. of the total. In the year 1913-14 the exports to

Australia and New Zealand together amounted to 1·9 per cent. of the total exports.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LEAFIELD WIRELESS SERVICE.

Sir H. BRITAIN asked the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the British representatives of Indian newspapers desiring to use the Leaffield wireless telegraph service to India have been informed that this service has been closed down; whether he can give the reason for this decision; and when it is hoped to re-establish the service?

Mr. HARTSHORN: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer which I gave on the 8th instant to a similar question put by the hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs (Mr. Sturrock), and of which I will send him a copy. I shall be happy to re-establish the service if there be any real demand for the facilities.

Wednesday, 14th May, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

IMPORT DUTIES.

Mr. WIGNALL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware of the serious consequence to the galvanising sheet and tinplate trade which will result to this country if the proposed increase in Indian tariff duties becomes operative; and is the Government taking any action in bringing before the notice of the Indian Legislative Council the serious effect upon trade in this industry if the proposed tariff becomes law?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware that the increase in the Indian import duties, if it is made, must be harmful in some degree to the trade in this country. It is, however, the policy of His Majesty's Government, as it has been of their pre-

decessors since the passing of the Government of India Act, 1919, to observe the Fiscal Convention recommended by the Joint Parliamentary Committee—that is to say, to refrain from interference in purely tariff questions when the Government of India and the Indian Legislature are in agreement

LABOUR CONDITIONS.

Mr. GRUNDY: I beg to move,

“That, in the opinion of this House, the conditions and wages of labour in India are so serious as to call for such changes in the Indian constitution as shall secure votes for and representation of the workers and peasants of India both in the Assembly and in the various legislative councils.”

I should like to say that I hope no words of mine will increase the discontent, or help to increase the number of periodic outbursts of the people against their conditions in India. I want to plead with the Government to take a greater interest in Indian matters than has previously obtained. I merely want to deal with one particular phase of the labour conditions in India that appeals to me probably more than any of the rest of the horrible and the appalling conditions that still obtain amongst the working classes in that country. Why I am at this juncture only attempting to deal with a very small portion of the working population of India, that is the mining population, the reason is because I am a miner myself, and I know something of the conditions of mining, whether it is in India or England. I am rather afraid that, in giving the figures, I shall not be able to give them with the fluency of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. My grasp of figures is very limited, and I may not make myself as intelligible to this House as I desire, but in drawing attention to the conditions under which the miners work in India, I want, in the first place, to point out that, in an answer given in July of last year to the hon. Member for Pontefract (Mr. T. Smith) by the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton), we had these very startling figures given in respect of the workers in the mines of India.

We were informed that in the coal mines of British India 65,786 men were

employed, 42,000 women, and 11,071 children under 12 years of age. This represented the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, practically 90 per cent. of the mining population of India. I think I am quite justified in saying that to allay discontent in India we ought to show that we at least have some interest as the rulers in the conditions of the workers in the mines. Instead of discontent and disturbance we want to show the people that we have some interest in bringing about happiness and contentment amongst them. In the answers which were given on various occasions in the past by the Under-Secretary for India we could get no statistics as to the wages and the hours worked by these poor people in the mines of India, but I have since learned that the hours of labour vary from 12 to 16 per day.

I ask this House to visualise in regard to mining conditions in India a man and his wife and child going to work in the pit, the child being under 12 years of age—how much under I do not know, but, at any rate, it is such an age that its mother can hardly have ceased singing lullabies to it. I know the hardships and dangers of mining, and I know that such work is only for strong, healthy men and youths. The idea at this time of women, no matter of what nationality, working in mines is a disgusting thing, and I am trying if possible to enlist sympathy in this House in respect to it.

In respect to another question we were told that the total number of accidents for the 10 years ending 1921 was 1,871 killed and 2,306 seriously injured. The figures for slight injuries were not given, and I think that would be fairly represented by many thousands. We have had later figures than that, and those which I shall give may not be quite as intelligible as I should like, but they are of a much later date, and they point out the shocking conditions under which the miners of India work. We are told in the official figures that for the year 1921 there were 240,663 persons working in and about the mines in India. In 1922 there were 228,511 persons working in and about mines in India, or a decrease of 21,152. We shall see how some of that decrease occurred in a few more figures which I shall give to the House. The 220,000 persons working in and about

[Mr. Grundy.]

mines included 137,017 who worked underground, and 91,494 who worked on the surface. Of that total 142,103 were adult workers, 78,806 were women workers and 7,602 were children under 12 years of age. During the year 1922, 243 persons lost their lives in the mines. They comprised 218 males, and 25 females, and, of those 218 males, we have to consider how many were poor little children under 12 years of age. We could get no figures showing how many of these children under 12 years of age had sacrificed their lives in the mines. We have also to consider that, in the year 1921, the total output was 18,358,934 tons. The fatal accident rate was 14 for every million tons raised. That, in comparison with our own rate, which is about 5·10 per million tons raised, shows the appalling death rate, and the shocking conditions under which these poor people have to work. We find also that, in India, there are 522 coal pits, which are worked by 252 coal companies with a paid-up capital of £5,681,000.

Attempts have been made in this House to ascertain the average dividends paid by these colliery companies in India. No figures could be obtained, but the statement was made in this House that some of the dividends were as high as 165 per cent. As I have said, we could get no official figures, and this was a figure stated by an hon. Member in a supplementary question that was put at the time. It appears to me, if one may say so, that, if these figures are correct, then, when enormous dividends like that are paid, it is time we took some interest in the life and safety of our Indian fellow-subjects. I understand that legislation is to come into force some time in July dealing with some of these conditions, and I am expecting and hoping that the Under-Secretary for India will give us some indication of what that legislation is going to be—whether or not it raises the age of the children, and whether or not it abolishes women's labour in the mines of India. I hope that in his statement, which I feel confident will be received with sympathetic interest, the Under-Secretary will give information on at least some of these matters. It is probable that, in this House of Commons, the statements that I have made may not be altogether believed. It may

be asked, "What does the hon. Member know about India? He has never been there?" All I can say is that I know what mining is, and I have endeavoured to visualise what the conditions of these people are; but I am going to read, from the Debates of the Indian Legislative Assembly on Saturday, the 15th March, 1924, what their own representative, Mr. Chaman Lal, says in reference to the conditions of the miners in India. He says:

"I have been in the mine-fields, and found more destitution there than probably exists in any other centre in India. I saw women and children going about with bare rags on their backs. . . . I have seen such utter misery and destitution that unless something drastic is done you are up against a very difficult problem. The huts are ill-ventilated, with barely room for a cot and a fireplace; and all the worldly goods of these poor miners consist of just a few utensils, and hardly any clothing. Everywhere you go in the mine-field you meet the spectre of poverty."

I do not think I need read any further. That is what was said by one of their representatives in their own Assembly, and so the whole chapter goes on, pointing out the poverty, the destitution, the hardships, the extraordinary high accident rates in the mines of India, and the exceptionally high profits that have been made by the coal companies.

In conclusion, I would ask the House to think of those poor 25 women that in 1921 lost their lives in the mines, and of those little children that are taken into this most dangerous calling, which, as I have said, is only a calling for strong, healthy men and youths. I ask hon. Members to take into their mind's eye the conditions of destitution that are pointed out by this representative, and the miserable wages that are paid to the people. Probably I have not put their case as well as a more fluent man would, but I do hope that this Government will, as far as it possibly can, use its influence to get legislation brought in that may bring a better standard of life to these people, and, if possible, abolish women's labour, or at least make the age of the children such an age that they are strong enough to go into the mines. If that were done, it would, instead of the periodic outbursts of discontent that I have described, bring about happiness and contentment among the people, and they would be proud that they are under the

British flag and would have faith in the fairness and justice of this House of Commons.

Mr. MILLS: I beg to second the Motion. The House is indebted to the hon. Member who has tabled this Motion, not only for a very reasoned and moderate speech, but for a speech which was intensely human from beginning to end. I could not understand the smiles on the very sparsely populated benches opposite—

Captain Viscount CURZON: Do you mind saying who smiled?

Mr. MILLS: It was obvious to anyone who cared to look. I suggest that it was the hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Sussex—

Earl WINTERTON: If the hon. Gentleman is referring to me, let me deny, with the greatest emphasis and indignation, that I smiled at a single word of the well-reasoned and interesting speech that we have just heard. I think the hon. Member ought to withdraw what he said.

Mr. MILLS: If it be so, I will withdraw, but I have in mind what was supposed to be a Debate in this House of Commons, initiated at a quarter past eight a few weeks ago, when two hours and five minutes of the two hours and three-quarters was taken up by a very one-sided diatribe from the other side of the House, and, when the speaker from the Front Bench, with three minutes to go, rose to reply, he was not even allowed to put in a personal explanation, and the business closed in uproar. The echoes of that Debate created a very painful impression throughout the whole of our Indian Empire, and for that reason, and because of the facts which are coming through, I think the House is indebted to my hon. Friend for a very reasoned and very human speech, and I hope those who are going to reply will not reply in terms of denunciation of a quotation from someone's speech in 1852 or someone else who ought to be somewhere else at some other time, but will make some effort to reply, because we do not ask merely the opposite side to reply. We want the Government to reply, and we want to know what they intend to do. The advent of a Labour Government raised the highest possible hopes among 320,000,000 people, who for over 70 years have been promised that some day in the

dim and distant future they would be given the right of self government. Now, in 1924, we have the spectacle that the textile workers of Madras have sent a delegate to Britain to ask not for any revolutionary proposal, but merely that if a man earns a magnificent wage, the equivalent of £1 13s. 4d. per month, he might be allowed to vote. I suppose when the speakers attempt to make a case in Britain they will be denounced as some more of the sedition mongers who are coming over to upset the benefits of British rule. It is time a little plain speaking was undertaken.

We ask the first Labour Government that they realise immediately at least some of the economic disabilities of the Indian workers. I refer specifically to the incidence of the Salt Tax. We listened to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few days ago outlining a Budget which increased the spending values of the workers of Britain, and which reduced the amount of contribution they have been making weekly for years to taxes where in hundreds of cases they were too poor to pay direct Income Tax. We know that the Secretary of State for India, representing a Labour Government, held out some measure of hope that the British Labour Government had some idea of ameliorating the burden of the helpless section of India in reference to the Salt Tax. The Salt Tax has been with us from the days of John Company, from the days of the East India Company's exploitation of the peoples of India as the result of contracts with various Indian princes, and so on. This vicious principle has been carried on, and if one turns to the pages of history he will find as far back as 80 years ago the merchants of Northwich and of various parts of Great Britain protesting to the British Parliament that the British consumer could buy salt at 30s. a ton, whilst the poor devil of an Indian peasant has to pay at the rate of £21 a ton. If we take in for a moment the standard of living in other countries, where salt to them represents a real luxury and enables them to digest some of the most appalling forms of food which they are forced to eat as the result of their economic conditions, one will understand the amount of resentment which has been generated throughout India as the result of the forcing upon the Indian people, in spite

[Mr. Mills.]

of the Indian Parliament's own wishes, not only the imposition of the salt tax, but the doubling of the salt tax last year in spite of the opposition of the duly elected people of India in the Indian Government. The late Under-Secretary for India had to defend that last year, and he defended it very courteously and ably from the point of view of the Conservative Government, but, after all, he had to admit to various Members who were questioning him, who are now Members of the first British Labour Administration, that this doubling of the salt tax was necessary because of expenditure incurred largely due to military equipment in India, while in the same month another of his colleagues was glibly telling the House that part of the British reserves are borne by the Indian people, and that if this burden were taken off the Indian people, it would have to be borne by the British taxpayer.

Earl WINTERTON: Will the hon. Member be good enough to give his authority for this statement that I said this enhanced Salt Tax was due to military operations?

Mr. MILLS: I do not say the Noble Lord admitted that it was due to military operations, but I want him to deny that it was. Perhaps I am not putting my point very clearly. I have never yet heard a Conservative Government tell a Conservative working man that a vote for them meant a payment of 6d. in taxation on every ounce of tobacco that he bought. It is only when he is up against the proposition of denying it that we have any kind of sport at all. Here is an article, written by a candidate for the Nobel peace prize, His Highness the Aga Khan. I do not suppose the Noble Lord would denounce him as a Bolshevik agitator from the backwoods of Madras. He won a race the other day, and is hoping to win another. This gentleman, one of the greatest ruling princes in India, has contributed to one of your big Sunday papers a four-column article. Here is what he says:

"I do not write in defence of the Parliamentary Members of India, but I would point out that the core of the Indian case is this. The greater part of the expenditure of the central authority being for military purposes, and the Legislature

having no control whatever over this expenditure, it was felt that the whole budgetary provisions should be rejected in the spirit of the man who says, 'you have taken the cream and we do not want the skimmed milk.'"

He goes on to say:

"The Indian argument is that excessive defensive insurance is imposed upon her willy nilly in time of peace, and that she is required to make her preparations on a much wider scale proportionate to her resources than is made in Great Britain."

It is an article which ought to have been read by every Member of the House who is attempting to understand what are the basic causes behind the unrest in India. I do not want the sneer levelled at me that I have never been in India. It has been levelled at me and at others, and we have lived to see that those who claim to be experts on other countries where people are struggling to be free have had to admit that, in spite of all their martial law, in spite of all the burdens put upon the British taxpayer to keep order by martial law, they have found that on the withdrawal of martial law and with the autonomy of the people, as occurred in Egypt, there has been a cessation of rioting, and there is peace now where you never had it any day or at any moment under the imposition of martial law. Therefore I have not any great faith in a person who says. "I know all about it because I have been there." I want to ask either the representatives of the British Government or those who wish to defend the imposition of the Salt Tax to answer the points that have been put. My hon. Friend has put a series of figures dealing with the standard of living of the Indian miner. I have given a few figures dealing with the standard of living of the textile workers. If it were necessary I could give further figures proving what exactly is the standard of living and what exactly is the rate of profit. I do not want to do that, but there are many reasons that could be adduced as to why the wages are low. One very relevant reason is given in an extract from a financial paper published in Calcutta.

"Labour troubles have moderated considerably. The Gurkha is an immediate cure for all labour troubles. The desire of evil-doers, even in our own Legislative Council, to get rid of them (the military) is a great tribute to their efficiency."

Wherever there is an attempt to raise the standard of living, the Gurkha is brought in. That is the evidence from

the financial paper of Calcutta. There are other financial journals which we could quote if there were time and need, and we will recite the quotations if any hon. Member opposite desires to make out that the British capitalist in India is striving against loss, and merely continues his investment in order to provide food and shelter for the Indian workers. The potential investor in India, like the investor in British railways in pre-War days, is always referred to either as a widow or an orphan urgently in need of dividends.

I hope that when a reply is made to the indictment put forward by my hon. Friend who moved the Motion, we shall get down to relevancies. The immediate urgency of the argument is that the British Labour Government are in a position to wipe out the doubling of the salt tax resisted by the whole Indian Parliament, and only imposed upon them by the act of authority expressly provided for by the Coalition Government in the framework of the Government of India Act, 1919. By the doubling of the salt tax there has been put upon the shoulders of the Indian people a burden of indirect taxation out of wages. They are paying Income Tax out of the miserable amount of £1 13s. 4d. per month, and even out of the miserable wages of the miner of 7d. per day. When they buy their salt they have to pay out of these miserable wages double the amount of tax that they paid before the War. Every manifestation of protest on the part of the people is denounced as a Bolshevik tendency which ought to be put down.

I want to draw attention to the phenomena of latter-day politics. During the War the Indian soldier, the Sikh, the Pathan, and all the men who are now denounced as murderous revolutionaries were taken to France, and for the first time in the history of British rule they were taught to fight as white men and were taught that they were equal to white men. They were taught to suffer and die in France and Flanders like white men, and for the first time in the history of the Indian soldier they were given to understand that they were as good as the white men with whom they were fighting. There are photographs, which can be produced, of Indian soldiers coming back wounded and being taken to Brighton and sent to convalescent homes for Indian soldiers.

After being treated on terms of equality with white men, after fighting and dying on terms of equality with white men, you ask these men to leave Western ideas and customs aside, to forget all the glimpses that they had of an advanced status, and to go back to the old conceptions and the old ideas of pre-War days. It cannot be done, and it will not be done. Chains are bursting all over the world, and the people who stand in the way of those chains are likely to be hurt.

My best wishes go out to the Indian people, not in any attempt to achieve anything by violence, but in a reasonable attempt to get from the British Labour Government an immediate examination of the conditions of those who work for wages, and, as a result of working for wages, what is the amount of their contribution to the upkeep of the military commitments in India. That is the least that the British Labour Government can do. We hope that it will follow out what the Secretary of State for India said in the other House in relation to the Salt Tax. He said:

"The Government of India decided that it was necessary they should balance their Budget and that they could not balance their Budget without doubling the Salt Tax. When the Assembly threw out the Resolution doubling the Salt Tax, the Government of India had to certify, as is provided in the case of certain Crown Colonies as well as India, that this was essential in the public interest and that that Resolution must become law. That produced an unfortunate effect in India, as that kind of action always does. In my own experience, whenever it has been had recourse to in the Colonies, it has been held to be a direct slap in the face and stultification of what the elected Members in India and elsewhere consider to be the first principle of democratic government, that you shall not have taxation without representation and that the representatives of the people should decide in matters of taxation."

Here is something which the Under-Secretary of State for India might very well answer. We feel very anxious about the continued bearing of these burdens by our comrades in India, for this reason, that we know that whether it be in Germany, in Japan, in India, in France or elsewhere, if the standard of living of the workers in any part of the world is cut down it inevitably leads to the standard being cut down here. I would ask hon. Members opposite whether they would refute the authority of the Presidential address at the 7th Indian Economic Con-

[Mr Mills.]

ference held in Bombay in January, 1924, delivered by the late Sir M. Visvesvaraya. This gentleman, giving an idea of what is happening, said:

"The monthly income of the Indian people, I have just stated, is rupees 5 per head, or an equivalent of 7s. 6d. per head. This is the average, but the income of the poorest classes is of course much lower than this. The masses of the population are steeped in poverty bordering on destitution, poverty to which there is no parallel in Western countries. You will agree that a people with so low a record of literacy as 6 per cent. and so poor an income as rupees 5 per head per month cannot be said to be equipped for the struggle for existence, and yet our late Governor, Sir George Lloyd, in a speech he made in November last, before a meeting of the Associated Chambers in Bombay, read the situation in a very different light. Said Sir George: 'The more closely the situation is examined, the more amazed does the student become, not at India's poverty, but at her prosperity and wealth!'"

I should like at this point to read an apt quotation from a speech made at a meeting of the Burmah Oil Company held at Glasgow. The meeting had been convened to discuss the iniquities of the Capital Levy, and Mr. G. L. Moore said:

"I have come all the way from London to be present at this meeting, and I should feel myself full of ingratitude if I had not come, because I have made a sum of £20,000 within the last few months out of the Burmah Oil Company alone. (*Laughter and applause.*) And, Mr. Chairman, with the four shares that you give me now for every five shares held by me, I have about 900 shares that have cost me nothing. (*Laughter.*) I study a thing and work in scientific fashion so that loss is impossible."

[An Hon. Member: "A system!"] Systematic exploitation. Therefore, I hope the Under-Secretary will deal with all this evidence and give us some indication that the Secretary of State for India or the Government have under consideration the calling of this Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the Act and, if necessary, to make some alteration before 10 years. Mr. Montagu himself laid down that it would be possible within the framework of that Act to take action before 10 years. I submit that the problem of to-day is pressing. You are driving men into the action which is always taken by men in despair. When they have no articulate voice in the councils of the nation they are driven into all kinds of assemblies which may be regrettable but which none the less are legal. I have no sympathy with the

Communist movement in any part of the world. The Communists are striving for my defeat in the Dartford Division of Kent unceasingly, but the Communist party of Great Britain, or Germany, or Russia or India are perfectly legal assemblies. I want the Under-Secretary of State for India to bear in mind the answer which he gave to a question, not orally, on which he could be further questioned, but in a written answer to the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton). The Noble Lord asked:

"What are the actual terms of the charge in the cases now being heard at Cawnpore against certain persons accused of sedition and in what Court is the case being taken?"

The Under-Secretary of State for India replied:

"The accused persons are charged of conspiracy to deprive the King of the Sovereignty of British India, an offence punishable under Section 121A of the Indian Penal Code. I would like to make it quite clear that the accused persons are not being prosecuted merely for holding Communist views"—

I would ask the Under-Secretary to analyse that sentence. Does he mean that part of the prosecution is because they hold those views, and if not why did he make that statement?

"or carrying on Communistic propaganda. They are charged with having conspired to secure by violent revolution the complete separation of India from Imperialistic Britain."—[OFFICIAL REPORT, 12th May, 1924; col. 944, Vol. 173.]

So far as I and my friends are concerned, they know full well that the man who is despised in India because he is moderate is laughed to scorn in this House as an extremist. The men whose candidature in India was met by the native population with the counter-candidature of goats with things tied to their tails, as symbolising the kind of candidate they thought fit to oppose these men because they were constitutionalists and loyalists and wanted a gradual evolution within the framework of the British Constitution, are, when they come here or speak or write, condemned as irresponsible agitators by people who play into the hands of the extremists by every damping down of national aspiration. We have been turning out for two generations at Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow and Edinburgh young men who have graduated in every

kind of science. They go back to India and they find the same thing

9.0 P.M. that we found in Egypt, that always the best jobs are reserved for those eldest sons of certain people, and that always national aspirations are repressed, and always it is said that India or some other country is not ready. You may as well say to a young mother that she must not put her first-born on the ground, because the baby is bound to fall over. Her reply would be, "If I do not put him on the ground he will never learn to walk."

The Indians, like every other race, are bound to make mistakes in their evolutions towards self-government, but it is our duty to help and not to hinder but to take such action as will rob them of any incentive to go in for those short cuts which lead nowhere. The kind of propaganda that is going on in India, the alternative to the kind of plea that every representative man is making, can only end in disaster, and ultimately, not only in disaster to India, but in putting tremendous expense on the taxpayers of Great Britain, and in the losing of an enormous number of valuable lives in putting down disorder. It is because I feel, and all my colleagues on this side of the House feel, that this is a subject which should be met promptly and wisely, and, above all, with the entire certainty that it will give the Indian people confidence in the first British Labour Government, that I desire to second this Motion.

Mr. WARDLAW MILNE: I listened with the greatest interest to the speech of the hon. Member who moved the Resolution, and I wish to join my hon. Friend who seconded it in saying how indebted all Members who are interested in questions regarding India are to him, not only for taking this opportunity of raising this matter in debate, but also for the moderate and helpful manner in which he put his case before us. I rather wished, however, that the hon. Member who seconded the Motion, if he will forgive me for saying so, had associated his remarks a little more with the actual Motion upon the Paper, because I wanted very much to find out what was in the minds of hon. Members opposite in reference to this Motion when they suggest that a remedy for these troubles of which they speak so feelingly and

earnestly—with many of their statements I agree—could come about by the mere extension of the franchise in India. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion in advance asks us to be very careful, and not to say that he had not been in India. I may assure him that I have no intention of making that statement, but, if he will forgive me saying so, it is not, therefore, wrong to suggest that perhaps to those who have been in India, and have been there for a considerable number of years, the problem is not so simple as it appears to the hon. Gentleman.

Perhaps the House will allow me to give one or two facts regarding India, which probably all Members know, but which some perhaps may have forgotten. India comprises three-fourths of the British Empire. It has an area as large as the whole of Europe, excluding Russia, and a population as thickly spread as Europe. It is not one nation. It is a multitude of nations. It is not one people. It is a vast variety of peoples. When Members recollect that there are no fewer than 220 definite distinct languages in India, and that of the minor languages 23 are spoken by no fewer than a million people each, and when they further recollect that in parts of India the Indians themselves are unable to communicate with each other, except those few who can communicate in English, it will be realised that you must not deal with the conditions in India as the basis of any comparison with conditions such as exist in Great Britain. Not only have you a vast variety of languages and religions, but the peoples of India are divided among themselves to a far greater extent even than the peoples of Europe. There is no more of racial kinship between, let us say the Sikh or the Gurkha and the Madrasi or the Bengali, than there is between the Scandinavian and the South Italian, or just as little as there is between hon. Members opposite who, like myself, come from North of the Tweed and, let us say, the Spaniard or the Portugese. There is an absolute difference in every possible way.

Then there is the great question of caste. You cannot ignore it. You have over 2,000 castes. Caste has grown up through hundreds and hundreds of years, and if any of us has the idea that caste can be removed by a stroke of the pen or

[Mr. Milne.]

by an Act of Parliament, let him put that idea aside at once. Caste has grown up probably through thousands of years, and it will certainly take hundreds of years to pass away. I hear an hon. Member say that it is passing, and no one will contradict him. But it must take a very long time. I would draw attention to a recent report of the conditions in the native State of Travancore, where attempts have been made—this is not in British India—to open the roads near the temples for the use of the depressed classes. That scheme, supported presumably by the State itself, has had to be abandoned and the State troops called out to keep order. You will see that it is a problem which the educated part of India has to face long before we have to face it. If you can visualise an England in which neither the brewer, nor the agricultural labourer, nor the charwoman, nor the fisherman, nor many others, can send a child to school, or use certain public roads that are respectable, or enter a church, you will get some idea of the bar in India. It is essential that we remember those conditions when we deal with the vast question of labour in the factories and on the land of India.

We constantly see in the Press, and occasionally here in this House, the expression "The voice of India." There is no voice of India. The only voice of India, apart from that expressed by the Government of India, is the voice of a few educated men, partially educated or very highly educated in some cases. I do not suggest for a moment that that voice should not be listened to; far from it. In every case the educated must lead the uneducated. But it is foolish to talk about the voice of all India. It is not very clear from the speeches in support of this Motion, except in the case of the Mover, who dealt with mines, whether hon. Members opposite wish to confine their suggestions particularly to mines and factories, or whether they are dealing with labour conditions as a whole. The first point to consider is this: The population of India has grown since 1872 from 206,000,000 to 319,000,000, which does not look as if British rule was such a bad thing after all. If that population is to be considered as a whole, it is well to remember that 72 per cent. of it is on the

land. India is pre-eminently an agricultural country, and the first factor in the prosperity of India is the prosperity of the land.

Mr. MILLS: Have the peasants or the farmers votes?

Mr. MILNE: I will come to that in a moment. As I said, 72 per cent. of the people live on the land. The conditions of the agriculturists in India are very difficult, perhaps, for some of us to understand. The greatest drawback to the agriculturist is the land system. Division and sub-division of land has been carried to an almost incredible degree. In a recently published report—it is published by the Government of India and is public property—it is stated that the average agriculturist does not work on an acreage above three acres, that he does not work more than about 150 days in the year, that he is busy during his ploughing and during his harvest, but that for the rest of the year he has little or nothing to do. That state of affairs is caused, partly, by the tremendous sub-division of land. It would not be in order now to go into details which I could give as to divisions which I have seen, but they are almost incredible in their minuteness. There is a great attachment to the land, but that sub-division has a great deal to do with the poverty of the agriculturist.

Let us bear in mind the true proportions of the case. The agriculturist in India is not the agriculturist at home. His wants are very few. It is probably right to say that in time his wants may be more and should be more; I do not deny that. But his wants to-day are very few. He knows very little of the amenities of life. He has, certainly, no education, or, practically, none, and, being in that condition, wants none. I do not say that that is right, but there the fact is. You cannot expect a person who has never had any education and has never seen any advantages from it to want it. The Indian agriculturist lives in a totally different country, under totally different conditions of climate, food and everything else. The most that we can hope to do in the immediate future, with the great mass of the people of India, is to try to help them gradually to get out of debt. The great curse of the Indian people is the fact that the marriage and the funeral services and all the ceremonies connected therewith

are so deadly expensive, according to their standard of living. The consequence is, that you have men who were born and who have lived and died in debt. They have taken on the debt of their fathers before them; they carry it on and increase it and die in debt. They know no other conditions. That is the first move which we can make towards bringing about better conditions. It will mean the very slow spreading of education.

It is possible that the Seconder of this Motion was more concerned with the conditions in the factories of India. Only 10 per cent. of the people of India are concerned with the factories. Of course, of 320,000,000 people that is a large number, but it is a small proportion of the population. The factories question is a totally different one from that of agriculture. In the great jute mills of Calcutta and in the cotton mills of Bombay, which are the largest groups of factories, there is no settled permanent labour at all, speaking generally. The labourer who works in the factories of India is first and foremost an agriculturist. He is driven into the towns, or goes there in the hope of greater gain, and as a result he gradually becomes a townsman. But in many cases he remains a countryman. At some period or other in the year he goes back to his native village, tills his own bit of soil, and still retains an interest in his own plot of land. That puts him in a category totally different from that of the factory worker in this country.

I am not going to suggest that, compared with English workers, the factory worker in India is as well off, because any such comparison is ridiculous. I am not even going to suggest that the factory worker in India should not be much better off under Indian conditions than he is, but let us look at the facts as they stand. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion spoke of a lowering of the standard. It is not the case that the standard has gone down at all. The standard has gone up very considerably, as is proved by the Government publications which are accessible to all Members of the House. The fact of the matter is that since pre-War days the standard of wages in India has gone up, and the real wages have gone up by over 17 per cent. Of course, the cost of living has gone up.

along with the wages, but the wages have gone up higher, making a real gain of 17 per cent., which is material. To-day, a weaver in a Bombay mill earns from 40 to 70 rupees a month. Hon. Members may take it that these figures are quoted officially. I admit that is not a very large sum. Of that sum he spends roughly 52 per cent. in food, because food has gone down considerably in India in the last year or two. Strangely enough, that is almost exactly the same proportion as is spent on food by the worker in this country.

In the case of clothes, perhaps naturally, the worker in India spends considerably less. Reference has been made to these people being in rags. I do not for a moment suggest that they should remain in rags and I think it very desirable that they should be properly clothed, but I ask hon. Members to recollect that the climatic conditions are somewhat different, and I do not think there would be any great expenditure on clothing above what is carried on at the present time, even if the wages were raised very considerably. There is this further curious fact that in housing, the Indian worker spends almost exactly the same proportion as the English worker. The housing conditions are very bad indeed. The housing conditions in Bombay, as I very well know, have constituted one of the greatest problems which the Bombay Government have had to face in the last 30 or 40 years, but very great works are being carried out in that connection, and the Development Directorate, the Improvement Trust and the Municipality hope by 1929 to have erected chawls or tenements for 200,000 workers, which is one-sixth of the total population of the city.

In the case of the Bombay Port Trust, who employ something like 11,000 workmen, they have provided housing for nearly half that number, so that there is a great movement going on. The mill owners have also done a great deal to help the solution of the problem. The housing conditions are extremely bad, owing to the congested nature of the island on which these great factories have been built up. This great problem can only be dealt with on a huge scale, but it is now being dealt with in more than one direction. In the Report recently submitted by the Government, there is the

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curious, though perfectly correct, statement that an increase in wages does not necessarily mean greater efficiency. Strangely enough in India, possibly for want of education, there is no desire to save, and there is no particular desire to do any more work than is absolutely necessary—a desire which I admit is shared in other lands. The consequence is that where you have increased payment at present very often you have a condition in which the workmen will only work for four instead of six days and idle the rest. It is usually said that the art of living in idleness is very difficult to acquire, but I think I am not exaggerating when I say that the Indian native has not so far found any difficulty in acquiring it. He has not been trained to work in the same way as the workman at home, and the consequence is one finds that during a working day in the factory there is a great deal of time for various reasons spent outside the actual workshop.

In addition, there is a great deal of absenteeism, the last figures being 17 per cent., which is a very large figure. That is no doubt caused by climatic conditions in which the work is carried on, and to some extent by the want of training. But if we compare these conditions with those of a country like Japan, we find that the workman in India is better paid, that there is much less female labour employed in India, and that his hours of work are much shorter in India. The hours of work are laid down under the Factory Act as 60 per week, and a holiday must occur within every 10 days. These hours are longer than at home, but it is interesting to note that in a Report just published at Simla on the working of the Factory Act, it is stated that a large number of factories are only working 48 hours a week, and in the case of children, whose hours are limited to 36 hours a week, many are only working 30 hours a week. Conditions are gradually improving. The next point which I bring to the notice of the House is that the factory worker is not so efficient as the worker in Great Britain, and cannot hope to be, although perhaps he will be in 100 years. In India one male weaver in a cotton mill minds two looms, while a girl in Lancashire will mind six. It will be found—and this fact was quoted by an Indian who was a colleague

of the hon. Members opposite in the last Parliament—that the ratio is something like $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 or, in other words, $2\frac{1}{2}$ people are required in India to do the work which one person does in this country.

It is a totally different standard, and I only point out these facts to show what we cannot possibly compare conditions in Lancashire or Dundee with conditions in Bombay and Calcutta. The condition of the worker, if we compare his income and expenditure on the essentials of life, is not so materially worse than the condition of the workman in other countries. It is no use comparing the £ with the rupee, or the earnings in this country with the earnings in India. It is a truism that wealth is not what you have in token money, but what the money will buy, and the Indian worker's expenditure *pro rata* on essentials compares not unfavourably with this country and France, and I do not think they are so very much below the conditions of the worker here. I do not mean to suggest by that that their conditions should not be improved. I now desire to say a word on the question of mines. I am not as well acquainted with the mining position in India as the factory conditions, but I know something of mining, and I have here an extract from a report published in Simla by the official who is, I think, termed the Mining Superintendent under the Government of India. He states that in the United Kingdom, in 1921, the death rate per 1,000 was 1·36 among people employed underground. The corresponding Indian rate was 1·46. This is the point where I entirely agree with my hon. Friend opposite. He proceeds:

"But per million tons raised it was 11·50 in India compared with 5·19 in the United Kingdom."

Then he goes on to say:

"It is estimated that about one-third of the accidents in India are caused by the fault of the people injured and only 9 per cent. due to the fault of the management of the mines. The Indian suffers from his stupidity."

It is natural it should be so if you realise that those people have not been trained to mining from their childhood. Very often it is imported labour; above ground labour in many cases. They go into the mines knowing very little about them, and are in a different category from the highly trained people of this country. There is the greatest necessity for im-

creasing the safeguards that can be taken. It is well to realise that there are great difficulties owing to the fact that the people themselves are entirely unacquainted with mining in many cases. This Resolution is to associate with the conditions described to-day a desire for an extension of the franchise, presumably with the idea that, if you extend the franchise, these conditions will improve. Is there any ground for that belief? It is not that I oppose an extension of the franchise, but it is useless to suggest that the people of India are in the position in which we can give them widespread franchise. The franchise to-day in India is a mere flea-bite. There are 6,000,000 voters out of 319,000,000, but as far as the property qualification goes it is not very high, about £2 per annum. It is rather interesting to notice that this very question of the representation of the wage earners was dealt with by a Committee of the Government of India. I wish to refer to only one part of their Report. They decided that it was useless to go on extending the franchise to the wage earners, immediately at any rate—

“In arriving at this decision I share the belief of the Government of India that the steady rise in prosperity of manual workers in India, and the rapid improvement of their housing conditions, will automatically and without undue delay result in qualifying the great majority of their numbers for the ordinary vote in the ordinary constituencies. No other solution than this could be regarded as satisfactory.”

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Does that refer to the whole of India?

Mr. MILNE: As far as I know it did. I am not absolutely certain on that point. This question which has been raised to-night brings up again the whole question of the present franchise condition and of the Act under which India is at present governed. I want to draw attention to the fact that we had one of the most eminent Indians speaking in the Empire Parliamentary Association just a year ago, the honourable Mr. Srinivasa Sastri. Mr. Sastri began his speech by saying this:

“Let me say, to begin with, that these reforms have, in my judgment, worked well; they have gone far to reconcile India to Great Britain and they have further shown that Parliamentary institutions, if adapted with care, can be worked to the great benefit both of India and of the Empire.”

Later on he dealt with the feeling of regret in India that things were not moving faster. But if we are going to consider the future, I think it is fair to say that there are two views, one held in India and one held in Great Britain, both of which are entirely and utterly wrong. Some people in this country hold the view that India is in a state of seething unrest, that the people of India are desirous of getting this franchise, and if they get it they think everything will be well. There is no such condition. There is a very strong moderate opinion in India, which it is the duty of this country to back up in every possible way. In India, on the other hand, there is a curious view of the reforms in the Act of 1919, that they are not intended to be anything but a sham, that there is something behind it all, and that we do not intend to go ahead in granting India the reforms set out in the Preamble to that Act. I would like to make perfectly clear that for my part, and I believe on the part of the whole House of Commons, and, indeed, of the British people, there is no intention of this country being stampeded by any action which may be taken by a few extremists in India, or by many extremists if you like. The great number of people in India have no desire whatever to see the pace go faster than is safe. Our duty lies, not with the few educated, but with the vast number of people who cannot speak for themselves. I am most anxious that we in this House should make it clear, first, that no amount of opposition to the Government of India, no attempt to wreck the reforms by constant obstruction in the Councils, will have the slightest hope of success.

I also want to make it perfectly clear—90 per cent. of the House of Commons will agree with me—that we do not wish for one moment to stop India's progress towards self-government in the end. We have no business whatever to put any stone in the path of the legitimate aims which the Indian people rightly hold. The idea that a scheme of constant obstruction will jockey the British people into going faster than they think right and necessary is doomed to failure. Many Members have probably seen in the “Daily Telegraph” to-day the statement from India that apparently Mr. Ghandi, I am glad to say, seems to be considering

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the necessity of working in co-operation with the British people to bring about aims he has so long advocated. The greatest school for responsibility is responsibility itself. You cannot go faster in this matter than the Indian people will let you. The rate of progress in the question of reforms in India is not laid down in the end by the British people, but by the Indian people, and I feel certain that those of you who, like myself, do not like dyarchy, will feel that this is not a time to raise the question of whether we did right in 1919, or whether we did wrong. We have to accept the fact that the Act was a signal of co-operation, a gesture, to use the now common word, of co-operation and good will to the Indian people. The British people to-day are still holding out a hand to India. All we say is you must co-operate. You must work with us in such a way as will encourage us to believe that you are ready for a further step. Ten years is nothing in the life of a nation, especially in the life of a nation like India. The idea that the European will leave India, or should leave India, is ridiculous. India owes a very great deal to the British race, and the Indian people as a whole know it quite well. I think it is marvellous the spirit in which the Indian Civil Service and the members of the other services in India have done their utmost to work in the spirit and the letter of the reforms laid down by the Act of 1919. They have had immense difficulties, very little understood in this country.

As for the great business houses in India, they have their part to play, and, after all, we owe India entirely to the spirit of the merchant adventurers who brought our occupation about. They have great possibilities, and they are doing an immense work in India, just as is being done by these great Parsee industrialists in Bombay and elsewhere. An hon. Member opposite referred to the great dividends paid by some of these mines, but I think there are plenty of Members, on this side of the House, at any rate, who could point to years in which the Indian mines have had very poor times indeed. That applies to every industry. I could tell you of times in which the cotton mills of Bombay have been extremely prosperous, and I could tell you of times when they have been in

the depths of depression. It is useless to take one dividend and to say, "This is an example of what the Indian mines are doing."

India to-day has a debt of £500,000,000, the total debt of an area the size of Europe, excluding Russia, with a population of 319,000,000, after, I suppose, 100 years of occupation. Something like 4s. 10d. per head—not in the £, but per head—is the taxation of India, and out of that £500,000,000 practically two-thirds of it is immediately productive debt, works of great value to India. She is in the most wonderful financial position of any country in the world. Based on national standards of finance, the position of India is unassailable; she is in as strong a position as, if not in a stronger position than, any country in the world. I have no desire that anything I say should ever be construed as an obstacle in the way of India moving forward in the path that certainly lies clear ahead. I want her to do that. I want to find this spirit of unrest, provided it is expressed constitutionally. Provided it is expressed constitutionally, it will do good and not harm. We have to listen, and rightly, to the voice of those who claim to speak for India, even although, as I have said earlier, it is impossible to hear the real voice of India at all.

If I may give one personal story, I shall never forget the first morning I spent in India, now a good many years ago. I had as "my guide, philosopher, and friend" on that morning what I suppose to-day would be described as a good old hard-baked colonel of that wonderful corps, the Indian Staff Corps, and I remember that he led me out to where, outside the suburbs, in the fields, there were working men bent double, working on the ground. He looked over these people, and he said, "Do not forget, my boy, that these are the real people of India. These are the people you are responsible for, whether you are in the Government service or in any other service; as a European, these are the people you have to think of." It would not be right, perhaps, to tell the second part of the story, but, with the indulgence of the House, I will do so. When we got back, he said, "Now, as to yourself, you will be told that you must not do this and you must not do that in India. You must not make a friend of the sun"—

that is quite true—"and do not make an enemy of him, either. Also, you will be told what you must eat and what you must drink. Take my advice, drink only whisky and soda, and drink as much of that as you can get." There is some sense in it, too, because there are great dangers from drinking things there that would possibly pass muster in this country.

I want to end on this note: We have to realise that those people for whom we are responsible are moving forward very, very slowly. The path is in front of them, and we want to encourage them along it. We do not want to stop their progress, but we want to make it perfectly clear that it is only by co-operation with this country, it is only by working together, it is only by showing us that they have profited by the stage of evolution to which they have arrived, that these reforms so far given can be worked to the advantage of Great Britain and of India, that the people are gradually being able to take a greater share in their own Government, that we can possibly look for that development which I, for one, believe lies in front of India, as still the greatest and most wonderful jewel in the English crown.

Mr. HERBERT FISHER: From every quarter of the House Members will, I am sure, agree with me in expressing my congratulations to the hon. Member for Kidderminster (Mr. Milne) for the extremely interesting and well-informed contribution which he has just made to our Debate. The House always listens with peculiar pleasure to Members who can bring so much first-hand knowledge to bear upon the subject under discussion. I cannot pretend to vie with the hon. Member in his extensive and profound acquaintance with Indian matters. I merely intervene in this discussion because, having been associated with Mr. Montagu in the passage of the Government of India Bill through this House, I have a not unnatural interest in its fortunes. I do not wish in any way to quarrel with the interest which is displayed by Members of the Labour party in industrial conditions in India. I think that interest is very natural, I think it is very wholesome, and for myself, if I may be allowed to say so, I admire the tone and the sincerity of the speech of the hon. Member for the Rother Valley (Mr.

Grundy), who introduced this Motion. He has obviously been affected, as we all are affected, by the spectacle of poverty, wherever it may present itself, and it is very natural that he should desire to draw the attention of this House to the condition of a population in whose fortunes we Englishmen are all so deeply interested.

But, as I listened to the speeches of the hon. Proposer and Seconder of this Motion, I began to wonder whether they were aware of an agency which at present exists for the purpose, not only of drawing attention to industrial conditions in India, but of toning up the industrial legislation in the Indian Government. I allude to the International Labour Bureau, which is associated with the League of Nations, and which has already drawn the attention of the Government of India and of the Provincial Governments to the condition of the factories in India, the conditions under which the factory hands work, and, as a result of this intervention and of these representations, very considerable improvements have already been effected in the industrial legislation of this great dependency. I would suggest to hon. Members on the Labour Benches that if they wish to bring further pressure to bear in any direction for the purpose of improving Labour conditions in India, they should direct their attention to the International Labour Bureau at Geneva.

Let me pass from the earlier part of this Motion to its concluding passage. I think, if I may say so, that nobody reading the Motion before the House would have inferred from its terms that the conditions and wages of labour in India had recently experienced an improvement. I think we should all have gathered from those terms that things were very serious, and much more serious than they have hitherto been, but as we have just heard, on the unimpeachable authority of the hon. Member opposite, that is very far from being the case. There has been a substantial improvement; not, indeed, an improvement to the extent and in the measure we should all desire. Still, there has been very substantial improvement of late, and there is no reason to suppose that that improvement will not continue. But when we come to the concluding passage of the Motion, we are brought up against the remedy which is proposed

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by the hon. Member. What is that remedy? It is that, in order to improve industrial conditions in India, representation should be secured for the workers and peasants of India, both in the Assembly and in the various legislative councils, and, in the speech of the Seconder of this Motion, we were adjured to hasten up the reforms.

Mr. MILLS: To establish a Royal Commission to inquire into them

Mr. FISHER: To establish a Royal Commission to inquire into them. May I, first of all, observe that the reforms themselves were very substantial in character? I was travelling round India just before the War. I was there in two successive years as a member of a Commission to examine into the public Services of India, and we found wherever we travelled a very great deal of interest, both among Hindus and among the Moslem communities, in the Indianisation of the Services, and we had considerable pressure put upon us to provide for a larger admission of Indians in the higher branches of the Services of India. But if anybody had told us that within the course of a very few years the principle of responsible government would have been extended to India, that we should have a Legislative Assembly at Delhi with a non-official majority, that in all the Provinces of India very important Departments of Government would have been handed over to Indian Ministers, I think that would have been regarded as almost beyond the dreams of avarice. What happened? The War came. India came forward and made a splendid contribution in the War, and the loyalty of India was warmly and deeply appreciated all over the British Empire. One of the results of that was the famous Cabinet announcement in favour of the extension of responsible government to India. We thought then, and I still think, we were right, that it would be fairest to India, it would be most to the advantage of India, that the process of developing the principle of responsible government in India should proceed by gradual and well-marked stages. After all, when we interrogate our own history, it was many centuries before we developed our Parliamentary system, our system of Party government, our system of Parliamentary Convention. It was a very long

process, and it was a very difficult process. And here we were asking India—India which only lately had been introduced to the methods and ideals of Western civilisation—to accept from us one of the most complicated and difficult products of Western civilisation, and to work it effectually for the good of India.

I say that it was to the interest of India that this great experiment should be gradually and safely developed. The hon. Member who moved, and the hon. Member who seconded, desire a Royal Commission in order to accelerate the progress of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. There has been a good deal of criticism as to the working of those reforms. There has been a good deal of disappointment both in India and in England as to the effectiveness of this great scheme of Parliamentary government. But let me remind the House that the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were carried out at a very critical and very difficult period of Indian history. There was the Caliphate agitation. There was the Turkish War. There was the War taxation. There was the revolt in the Punjab. There was the terrible and melancholy calamity of Amritsar. There were the difficult economic conditions which were created by the War. Those circumstances made the atmosphere as difficult as possible for this great constitutional development, and I say we must not judge of its success by our experience during the last few years. I have read a good many of the Debates in the Legislative Assembly in India. I think there is a great deal of first-rate political promise displayed in it; but do not let us go too fast. There is at present a Committee in India, appointed by the Government of India, which is engaged in examining the working of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. It is true it is not a Royal Commission; it is an Indian Government Committee. Let us wait, at any rate, for its Report. Then, again, there has been another very important Commission working in India. There is the Lee Commission on the Public Services. The Report of the Lee Commission is not yet published, but rumour says that it is a unanimous Report, that, in other words, it has received the assent, not only of the English members of the Commission but also of the Indian members of the Commission. If that,

indeed, be so, I trust that a Report, supported by both sides unanimously, by Indians and Englishmen, will be put into force.

If we have in this Report, as I hope and trust we shall have, a solution of the public service problem quite acceptable to the English public and to the Indian public, surely we may leave the matter to rest there for a little? I think really hon. Members on the Labour Benches, after what we have heard from the other side of the House to-night, must realise that there is no immediate prospect of an amelioration of industrial conditions in India likely to flow from an extension of the franchise. Such an extension may be a very good thing. I hope, indeed, that the franchise may, in due course, be extended in India. I hope that in due course these liberties may be widened in India, but I do submit in all confidence that there is no necessary or probable relation between an improvement in Indian industrial conditions on the one hand, and such an expansion of the franchise as is contemplated on the other hand, in this Motion. If you wanted to throw the apple of discord into India to paralyse the progress of moderate, sensible, industrial legislation, I cannot conceive any method more efficacious than the expansion of an electorate of 6,000,000 into an electorate of 300,000,000. That is a revolution which really no sane man can contemplate. Those are the few observations which I wish to offer.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The House will agree with me in welcoming an opportunity of discussing on this occasion matters connected with India. I should like to join my tribute to that already paid to the hon. Member who opened the Debate on his speech of this evening. I am afraid I cannot extend the same tribute to the Seconder. The hon. Member said that we might at least be relevant, but it is a long time since the House listened to so delightfully irrelevant a speech as that of the hon. Member who seconded the Motion. I think the explanation is that the speech was prepared for another occasion to that on which it was given, and that the hon. Member considered that this was an opportunity of bringing it out, and having intended to give it, he brought it down to the House. I should like to point out also that he

is a little bit unjust in his criticism of the Salt Tax, because I would remind the House that, although it is true that the Salt Tax was certified last year, hon. Members will be aware of the fact that the Salt Tax is now back to its former figure. That has taken place quite recently under the certification powers exercised by the Viceroy.

It seems to me that the Resolution, as has been pointed out by the previous speakers, divides itself into two parts, one dealing with the conditions of labour in India and the other with the extension of the franchise as a means of the amelioration of those conditions. The Government has every sympathy with the motive, as I am sure has every Member of the House, that has prompted the Resolution as emphasising the desire, universal in this House, for an improvement of industrial conditions in India, and as showing a new interest in the very intricate problems of Indian representation. I should also like to add that the India Office particularly welcome the increased interest in Indian industrial matters, as shown by the large number of questions now appearing on the Order Paper, sometimes, perhaps, to the confusion and discomfiture of the Under-Secretary who has to give the answers.

I would remind hon. Members that the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, have had this important result, that amongst the transferred subjects industry must now be included. I remember in a speech I made in this House on a previous occasion I tried to make it clear that certain subjects are now transferred to the Provincial Governments in India. Amongst the subjects so transferred is this difficult question of industry. This means the administration of the Factory Acts, the settlement of labour disputes, housing, and the general welfare of the labourers is entirely the concern of the Provincial Governments. The Minister, in addition, is responsible for the policy which is to be pursued in the matter of granting assistance to industry generally, and the development of technical and industrial education. So that the Minister of a Provincial Government in India, at the present time, has his hands pretty full. If these subjects have been transferred,

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as they have to the Indian Minister, it means that the Secretary of State in Council neither receives reports on these questions, nor is he in a position to give effective instruction in regard to them, and the Under-Secretary knows this very well, because he occasionally finds that Members of this House know unofficially a great deal more than he himself knows officially. I think it will be generally agreed, according to the terms of this Resolution, that the hon. Members who moved and seconded have in mind chiefly industrial conditions in India. I think it is important, as the hon. Member who spoke from the benches opposite pointed out, that we should realise that industry, after all, plays a comparatively unimportant part in the life of India at the present moment. I have comparative figures. They are very instructive, and possibly the House will bear with me while I give some of them. Let me give comparative figures of the percentages employed in industry in India and the percentage of those employed in this country.

If we take the United Kingdom, first of all we find that 58 per cent. of our population is engaged in industry, against 12 per cent. in India. On the other hand, if you take agriculture you find that only 8 per cent. of our population are engaged in agricultural pursuits, whereas in India nearly 72 per cent. are engaged in agriculture. When we come to the particular question of mining, which has often been referred to to-night, we find the percentage of the population in India engaged in that industry is not really a percentage: it is two per 1,000 of the total population. It is, I think, important that we should put the problem of Indian industry in its right perspective, and when we speak of the conditions of labour in India, we ought, as one hon. Member who spoke on the other side suggested, to visualise this fact: that India is predominantly an agricultural country, and, secondly, an industrial country. That is to say, the unit of economic life in India is not the factory or the mine, but the self-sufficing village, where almost every craftsman is represented by his caste. It is interesting to find that we have an almost complete analogy in the history of our own manorial villages in the early middle

ages, where you have almost every craftsman represented by what was virtually a caste, although generally known in this country as a guild system. *

If we look into the figures with regard to India, we find that, out of the total population of 318,000,000, 217,000,000 are concerned with agriculture. There are 8,000,000 landowners; there are 187,000,000 tenants or occupying owners; there are 41,000,000 farm servants, nearly equal to the total population of these islands, and, more or less 1,000,000 estate agents and managers. It is true, as some hon. hon. Members remarked, that this village autonomy is gradually breaking down, and there are various and very interesting reasons for the breakdown of village autonomy in India. First of all, there is the growth of individualism, as we call it, that indefinable something which we sometimes, I suppose, call Liberalism; and, secondly, there is the gradual growth of the money economy, that is, the substitution of money payment for the perquisites that the craftsmen originally enjoyed for doing their work. Thirdly, as you can imagine, there is the introduction of Western manufactured goods. The interesting thing is, that the breakdown of our own village communities can be traced to almost exactly the same causes as are beginning to operate in India at the present moment. But I notice one interesting fact which the figures bring out, and it is that, curiously enough, owing to an increase in the price of agricultural produce, there is a tendency for the village craftsman to take up agriculture. There is a movement in India from the village on to the land, instead of, as in this country, in many cases, from the village to the towns. I was very much interested in what the hon. Member said with regard to the question of the growth of co-operation. It is quite obvious that, if we are going to get an improvement in the productivity of Indian agriculture, it can only come through the increase of co-operation.

I have detained the House in order to try to give a picture of the native economy of India—the self-sufficing village, whose economy has been threatened by the introduction of Western methods. It is in that kind of environment that Western industrial methods have been recently introduced. I am sure all of us in this House hope that the Indian peasant will

be spared the uprooting policy—which was nothing but theft, in my opinion, masquerading under the guise of law in the supposed interest of a more efficient system of production—which has practically robbed our peasants in these islands of every right which they formerly possessed to the soil which they cultivated. It is to be hoped, at any rate, that the breakdown of the Indian village economy will not result in the robbing of the peasants of their right to the very small holding they have, to which reference has been made to-night, and which so tremendously increased the tragedy of industrial revolution in these islands. It is to be hoped, in the second place, that India, at any rate, will be spared some, at least, of the horrors of the industrial revolution as we knew it in this country. If I may say so respectfully, one has very much sympathy with Mr. Gandhi's backward look in the interests not only of his own people but of the Western people as well. But if India is to become a great industrial nation, and I believe she will—indeed she is that already for we have heard to-night from the right hon. Member for the English Universities (Mr. Fisher), she is recognised as one of the great industrial nations of the world—I am sure that the industrial experience of this country will prove invaluable to India when she comes to accept Western industrial methods.

There is one other thing to which I should like to make reference when one studies Indian problems generally, that is the amazing poverty of the workers in India, to which sufficient reference has already been made to-night. The potentialities of India seem to me to be incalculable, but the poverty is almost inconceivable. Let me give a few figures that will bring this out. The average wealth of the population per head in India, dividing the total wealth of the community among the number of inhabitants, is something like 180 rupees; in Canada it is 4,400 rupees; in this country it is 6,000 rupees. The same thing is borne out by a comparison of incomes. The average annual income in India, taking the average income of the whole of the inhabitants, rich and poor, is just 60 rupees, five rupees per month, as we have heard to-night. In Canada it is something like 550 rupees. In this country the average income is 720 rupees. It would take me too long to attempt, even if I

could, to explain the causes of the excessive poverty of India, but I would like just to make this one remark: that people living in this way on the verge of existence, so to speak, can very easily be depressed below it, and that is the almost continual experience of India, because, unfortunately, nature does frequently depress these unfortunate people below even the margin of subsistence. There are one or two other considerations with regard to the excessive poverty of these people, which tends rather to perpetuate itself. First of all, there is the great lack of capital in India. There is no doubt at all, if you examine these figures, that there is a close co-relation between the amount of wealth in any country and the average earnings of the individuals living there. It seems to me that the standard of living in India cannot be very greatly improved until the amount of capital available there is very greatly increased [*Interruption.*] I am not suggesting, of course, that the capitalist system, as we know it, should be introduced into India; but there is a fundamental distinction, it seems to me, between the necessity for capital, and the introduction of the abominable capitalist system. [*Interruption.*] There is no denying the fact that with conditions such as you get in India, where men depend on the cultivation of the soil particularly, some means must be found for getting a much larger amount of capital than is available at the present time. I thoroughly agree with the suggestion made that the question of debt is another very serious matter and ought to be tackled immediately. The standard of living in the rural parts of India is really so low that the people are driven almost against their will to work in these factories. I want to point out that the excessive poverty naturally drives a large number of these people willy-nilly to the factories. The tendency is to perpetuate low wages, and under these conditions the owners will not pay higher wages while they can get these people to come in and work in their factories.

Turning to the industrial population, India has 14,000,000 people still engaged in the cottage industry, and the lot of these people is even more tragic than the people who are actually working under factory conditions, because they are attempting to work by hand and to compete with modern machinery. It is

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the old story of the Lancashire weaver over again, who finds that his hand labour has to compete in efficiency and speed with the work of modern machinery. The position of these 14,000,000 workers is parlous in the extreme.

I now come to industrial wages, of which we have heard a great deal this evening. It is very difficult, in my opinion, to give any statistics of wages which are satisfactory when the conditions are so diverse as they are in different parts of India. The only scientific statistical inquiry that has been carried out in any particular industry was the one carried out in 1921 in Bombay into the cotton industry. The Returns in that case refer to 194,000 employes, that is to say, more than 80 per cent. of the total number of people employed in the industry. I will give the weekly earnings in English figures, although I quite agree that they are somewhat misleading, because it is impossible to compare them with the standard of living in India with which they ought to be compared.

Mr. WALLHEAD: Will you also give us the hours of labour per week?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have attempted to divide the question in this way, because I wish to deal with wages first, and then I will deal with the conditions of labour, including the hours. In May, 1921, the weekly earnings, in English money, in the Bombay factories, according to this very careful investigation, worked out as follows: A man, on an average, earned 10s. 3d.; a woman, 5s. 1d.; big lads and children, 5s. 3d., the average being 8s. 10d. a week. As I have suggested, these figures are very interesting when they are compared with pre-War figures and the figures obtaining in other countries, and when they are compared with the increases that have taken place in the cost of living in the meantime. We get this as a result, that the nominal wages in 1921 in Bombay were 196, compared with 100 in 1914, while the nominal wages in the United Kingdom were 211; that is to say, in the United Kingdom in 1921 they had more than doubled as compared with 1914, while in Bombay they had not quite doubled. But if you take the cost of living in the two countries, and correct these figures, you will then find that the wages in Bombay, corrected

by the cost of living, were 117, as against 110 in this country. That means that, if you compare the position of the average wage-earner in this country with his position in 1914, he is only 10 per cent. better off, despite the increase in wages that he has had; and if you compare the position of the Bombay worker, you find that he is 17 per cent. better off. That, I suggest, is the only scientific comparison that you can make. Taking France, which is exceedingly interesting, the nominal wages in France are more than five times what they were in 1914, but, again, the cost of living has gone up so enormously in France that the real wages are only 116; that is to say, the French worker is a little better off than the worker in this country. In Germany the nominal wages are 1,590, as compared with 100 in 1914, but the worker is not a bit better off, although his nominal wages have increased. The result of this comparison—which is the only scientific comparison that can be made—as between wages in the different countries in 1921 and in 1914, is that you have in this country 110, in France 116, in India 117, and in Germany 100.

I want now to say just a word about the miners, to whom reference has been made. The number of miners has already been given, namely, 228,511. Of these, 137,000 are employed underground, and 91,000 above ground. There are 142,000 males employed, 78,000 women, and 7,602 children. I have no figures with regard to the earnings of miners which are at all comparable scientifically with the earnings in the factories, but these facts may be interesting. In 1909 the earnings per month per man were 6.82 rupees; in 1910 they were 10.36 rupees; and in 1922 they were 19 rupees—that is to say, in 22 years the earnings of miners in India have increased three-fold. There is no need for me to refer again to the statistics of accidents, which were given by my hon. Friend who opened this discussion; but I find, according to the Report of the Mines Inspectors during the period to which my hon. Friend's figures related, that is to say, between 1910 and 1919, that the number of accidents per 1,000 was 1.46, as against 1.36 in this country.

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER: Can the hon. Gentleman tell us the average age of the 7,000 children employed there?

Mr. RICHARDS: I could not give that off-hand.

Mr. DICKSON: Can my hon. Friend tell us the lowest age at which they are permitted?

Mr. RICHARDS: No. I understand the usual practice is for whole families to be employed.

Sir FREDRIC WISE: Have you the steel workers' wages?

Mr. RICHARDS: I want to say a word now about conditions of labour. The conditions of labour in India at present are more or less controlled by the International Labour Conference at Geneva, and India is one of the nations which is represented at that Conference by her own representatives. The labour conditions, consequently, are largely subject to the control of that body, and since 1919, when it was instituted, India has co-operated heartily in the work of that Conference. She has ratified more draft Conventions than almost any other country, and is one of the few countries in the world which have ratified the Washington Convention regarding the hours of labour. Our own country, I understand, has not ratified it as yet. India is the only country of chief industrial importance which has ratified the Convention. She has brought in a new Factory Act in 1922 and a new Mines Act in 1923 in order to give effect to the provisions of that Convention, and the Government of India have gone even further than it was necessary to go in order to give effect to the Hours Convention of 1919. That Convention does not apply to China, Persia or Siam, and there are special provisions both for Japan and for India. In the case of India the Convention prescribes a working week of 60 hours, a minimum age for night work of 14, and a minimum age for employment of 12. India, although she is entitled to have a 60-hours' week, has adopted a maximum of a 54-hour week for work below in the mines and a minimum age of 15 for night work, and has prohibited the night employment of women altogether. It is no exaggeration to say that the conditions of employment in India, speaking generally, are superior to those in Japan, and M. Thomas, the director of the office

at Geneva, in a report presented to the Geneva Conference of 1922, said:

"The new social legislation of India is certainly a splendid result of which the International Labour Office may well be proud."

There is also under consideration by the Government of India a proposal to remove women as well as children from the mines altogether, and consultation is taking place between the Government and the Provincial Governments with a view to giving effect to this as speedily as possible. Everyone understands that it would cause considerable dislocation if an improvement of that kind were made immediately, and negotiations, I understand, are proceeding on the assumption that the removal should be complete within the next, say, five years. There is also a Bill for the registration and protection of trade unions which is prepared by the Government, and a new Workmen's Compensation Act which is to come in force on 1st July of this year, and they are contemplating the introduction of new machinery for conciliation. Of course, one cannot conceal the fact that, despite these "ideal conditions," occasionally we do have strikes in India. We had a strike of that character, and a very serious one, at the beginning of this year. I should like just to refer to two very regrettable causes in connection with that strike. First of all, there was the question of the payment of bonus. That question was investigated by a Committee set up by the Governor of Bombay, and, although I think the labourers were entitled to expect a bonus, seeing that they had had it for a good number of years, on the other hand, we must recognise this fact that the bonus was paid in previous years because these mills had been enjoying extremely high dividends, but during 1923 no such dividends had been paid.

Mr. MILLS: Will the hon. Gentleman say how much was put to reserve as compared with previous years?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like notice of that question.

Mr. MILLS: Exactly six times as much.

Mr. RICHARDS: A very regrettable feature of that strike was this. Wages in the Bombay mills are supposed to be paid monthly, but they are paid on the 15th of the month following that when

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they fall due. This is very unsatisfactory, and there is no apparent reason why the Bombay millowners should not follow the Bengal jute mills, where payment is made weekly. I am sure if that were done it would be a great boon to the very poor workers of Bombay, who have to come into the factories many miles from the country and are held up there for six weeks waiting for the money due to them. Just a word with regard to the other part of this Resolution. I was interested to find, for example, that the All-Indian Trade Union Congress passed a similar resolution in March this year urging on the Government the necessity of extending the basis of the franchise for the election of members of Local and Central Legislatures, and I should like to remind the House of Commons again, as was done by the right hon Member for the English Universities, that this question was very carefully considered by the Joint Select Committee of the two Houses and I find that they made definite recommendations on three points. First, that there should be a more adequate representation of the rural community; secondly, that there should be a better representation of the wage-earning classes, particularly of the rural workers; and thirdly, which is one of the most difficult problems in connection with the extension of the franchise in India, that the representation of the depressed classes is really very inadequate. This is a very large question to enter into in any detail, but any one interested can find the remarks made on this question by the Government of India, pointing out that, although they were very anxious that the franchise should be extended, it is at bottom, as we all feel, a question of education. That is to say, it is not merely a question of constituencies. It is quite as much, in my opinion, a question of constituents. This question of the franchise extension is one which must necessarily arise in connection with any steps which may in due course be taken to revise the form of the Constitution and the powers of the Provincial Governments of India, and such questions may naturally be expected to arise in the inquiry, to which reference has already been made, which has been initiated by the Viceroy into the working of the Act of 1919, and which is

already in progress, the Report of which we are shortly expecting to receive.

Earl WINTERTON: I think everyone on this side of the House, and I hope most hon. Members in other parts of the House who desire to see in Indian affairs a continuity of policy between one Government and another, will have heard with considerable pleasure the speech which the hon. Gentleman has just made. He has given, on the second occasion on which he has spoken in the House, an effective reply to the complaint which had been made from the benches behind him. I only regret that the hon. Member for Dartford (Mr. Mills), who seconded the Resolution, was not in the House to hear the arguments of the hon. Gentleman. In answer to the point made by the Mover of the Resolution, I am going to refer to what has already been done to improve labour conditions in India. The hon. Member, who made a most striking speech, to which testimony has been paid from all quarters of the House, made a reference to the Government of which I was a Member, and said that questions had been put to us about the conditions of labour in India, and that some of the answers which we had given showed an appalling state of affairs. It suffices now to say, and I think that it is a fact which he should know, that those improvements, to which the Under-Secretary has just referred, which have placed India in a better position, from the point of view of modern industrial hygiene, than any other Asiatic country, were initiated when a wicked Conservative Government was in office in this country.

It is true that the matter was primarily a matter for the Government of India. It is true that the Indians themselves, through their Ministers and representatives, have more than the major part of the control over these matters, but it should be noticed that these improvements which have taken place—and it was an honest mistake of the Mover to suppose that nothing had been done—were done when the late Government were in power in this country. The Under-Secretary stated, and it is a fact, that, after all, the real problem in India was the problem of the land. India is an agricultural country, and an agricultural country to a greater extent almost than any other country, at any rate any

other country of its size, in the whole world to-day, and he referred to some of the reasons why the problem of the land is so difficult and why the poverty of the people is so great.

One of the reasons, undoubtedly, is the pressure of population which has been growing year by year, and which has grown especially since the British connection with India, because since that British connection steps have been taken to deal with the appalling famines and diseases which formerly devastated that country. Then there is the fact, which it is as well should be known to some Indians and to other extremists who would deny to this country any share in the benefits to India during the last 100 years, that some of the poverty is due to the terrific taxation, and to the draining away of the rights of the cultivators which went on in India before the days of British occupation, from which the land has never recovered. But the condition of affairs is primarily due to what the Under-Secretary very frankly stated, having regard to his position and to the position of his Government, as the lack of capital on the land in India. It was with the greatest pleasure that all of us on this side of the House heard such an admission from a member of the Government, and realised that, at any rate, capital is sometimes considered by some members of the Government to be an advantage. Some hon. Member opposite said that it was remarkable how with responsibility there comes a sense of responsibility. Never has that very true statement been better exemplified than in the frank and very sincere admission of the Under-Secretary of State to-night.

Mr. WALLHEAD: Will the Noble Lord give me the name of any Socialist who has ever decried capital?

Earl WINTERTON: Hundreds of Socialists have done so, and they are standing at the street corners to night. You have only to go to these street corners to hear the statement made. I was very glad to hear the Under-Secretary say that one of the great difficulties connected with the position of the workers in India is the lack of capital in agriculture and in the agricultural machine generally in India. The result of that is to be found in a matter to which reference

was made either by the Under-Secretary or by an hon. Friend behind me. I believe it was made by an hon. Friend behind me, who made a very able speech on a subject which so often obtains very little recognition in the Press, inasmuch as there is always a tendency to regard deliberations on Indian affairs as tedious. It was a speech which showed that there are Members in this House who really are competent to speak on Indian affairs, with a life-long experience of India behind them. The hon. Gentleman said that one of the features of agriculture in India was that a vast number of people working on the land, farmers and others, were in debt from the day of their birth to the day of their death. That is true, and it explains why in the East the money-lender, and particularly certain races which provide the majority of money-lenders, are so feared and hated because of the immense power which they have over the land. There, again, in justice to what this nation has done in India, and in every other Asiatic country with which we have had any connection, it should be stated that we have done more in 100 years to help the cultivator, and especially the small cultivator, the peasant, to free himself from the clutches of the money-lender, than India, when under its own rule, did in 1,000 years. That is true of Egypt also, but particularly so is it true of India. I hope that the system of helping the cultivator by means of land banks and co-operation and in other ways will be continued.

All of us are agreed that much still remains to be done to raise the status of the ordinary peasant and labourer in India. What, after all, is the real bar and hindrance to the improvement of the great mass of the people in India? It is undoubtedly the existence of a system which produces 50,000,000 people out of something like 320,000,000 in British India who belong to the out-caste and depressed classes. I doubt if the House as a whole realises the position of these people. A statement was made the other day by a member of the Madras Council and a representative of one of the depressed classes. He gave evidence before the Royal Commission presided over by Lord Lee to show how out-caste children are excluded from schools and have to sit outside the schools and learn what they

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can of what is going on inside in that way. He gave examples of the quashing of sentences by Brahmin Judges on men whose only offence was that they had used the same public roads as those used by the higher castes. It is a fact that in parts of India to-day, especially in Madras, a large number of these out-castes are not only debarred access to all temples, but are actually liable to physical attack if they make use in certain towns of some of the principal streets, or if they draw water from a well from which the higher castes draw water.

It has always been the policy, not only of successive British Governments but of every Englishman who has held office in India, from the days of John Company onwards—it has always been our national determination—to have the utmost regard for the religious scruples of the various peoples of India. We have carried out that policy probably to a degree that no other country coming in touch with Oriental peoples has ever carried it out—a deliberate policy of having the most scrupulous regard for religious customs widely differing from our own. I may say at the same time that when these religious scruples go directly against the ideals of equality, which are at any rate aimed at in every democratic country to-day, it is very hard to see how, if they are persisted in, India can ever enjoy self government on an equitable basis. I do not see how the problem is to be solved. It was, I think, the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Wallhead) who in an interruption to my hon. Friend the Member for Kidderminster (Mr. Milne) said that the caste system was not now as rigid as it had been, but I can assure him, from my personal knowledge and from my experience in an official position as Under-Secretary, that the amount of improvement is infinitesimal compared with the disabilities from which the out-castes suffer. Mr. Gandhi, who has a disarming way frequently of saying things which go against his own political faith, admitted with a frankness and fairness to which I, at any rate, pay tribute that they would not begin to get on to the road towards the universal brotherhood which he preached until the highest castes were prepared to embrace the lowest. What advance has he made in that direction, since Mr. Gandhi made that statement a couple of years ago, on the part of the

Indians themselves, who are the only people who can effect a change? The British Government cannot do it, and no Government in India could for a moment insist on the Indians doing it of their own accord.

I wish to mention an incident which occurred to me personally. A very distinguished Indian friend of mine came to see me when I was at the India Office about a certain matter connected with the disabilities of Indians in Africa. I said, "You talk to me of these disabilities in Africa. It is an unpleasant and painful reminder, but I have to give it, and I have to tell you that public opinion in this country, irrespective of politics, feels you would be in a stronger position to talk of these disabilities were it not for the existence of the disabilities from which, as a result of the religious system in India, 50,000,000 people suffer in that country." My Indian friend turned to me and said—and this part of the story appears to be against myself, but I will give the answer to it—"You talk about disabilities. Are there none in this country?" He pointed dramatically towards the street and said, "Are you prepared, as a blue-blooded Tory, to treat as a brother one of the unemployed or one of the newspaper sellers out there?" The answer I gave was this:

"Whether I am prepared to do so or not is a matter of individual taste; but there is nothing in this country, and there are no disabilities in this country which prevent a man who starts as one of the unemployed in the street, from attaining to the highest offices in the State."

My words would have had even greater point to-day when we see—and it is a credit to the Government, to this House, and to individuals in this House that it should be so—the rapidity of the journey from the footplate of an engine to a Court suit. [*Interruption.*] The hon. Member for Dumbarton Burghs (Mr. Kirkwood) makes a remark, but it is almost as difficult for me to understand his vernacular as it is to understand Indian dialect. I assure the hon. Member that what I said was intended to be quite complimentary. [*Laughter.*] I am rather surprised at that laughter. Is there anything that is not in the highest degree creditable to a man who can rise from the lowest position and attain to the position of a Minister of the Crown?

Mr. KIRKWOOD: There was exception made to the wearing of Court dress

Earl WINTERTON: If there be anything that offends hon. Members opposite in my reference to Court dress, I shall be glad to withdraw it and merely to refer to the Treasury Bench. [*Interruption.*] I hope that hon. Members will allow me to continue, because this is a serious matter in which the House is interested, namely, the position of the people in India. I do not see that in the present state of affairs that exists in India, between the depressed classes and the highest castes, respectively, you can ever have under a purely Indian administration, assuming that such an administration be possible, a proper representation of these people unless you have an alteration of the whole basis of society in India, an alteration which can only be brought about by the Indians themselves. I should be interested to hear on other occasions, when we have longer time for debate, what is the answer on that point of those hon. Members who to-night have urged that there should be an extension of self-government in India.

I should like to say that to do the Indian public man or the Indian politician justice, the people in the Councils, especially the extremists, the men who hold the most advanced views and who are in favour of India's freedom from British control, no longer quote, as they used to do, Macaulay and Burns. They no longer say they want to build up a system in India similar to the system advocated by reformers in this country 50 or 100 years ago. They no longer talk like that. They say: "What we are asking for is Indian self-government," and they never talk of democratic Indian self-government, which is a very different thing. In other words, the extremist opinion in India to-day, so far as it is vocal, is the opinion which represents the point of view of a talented but very small and narrow oligarchy, mainly composed of journalists and lawyers.

I agree fully with what has been said by my right hon. Friend the Member for the English Universities (Mr. Fisher). I am at one with him in saying that those of us who, like him and me, were responsible either for the inception or for the working of the reforms have always contemplated the advance of India, through

successive grants of self-governing power, given freely by this House, to the goal of what is loosely termed Dominion self-government, but let it be clearly understood that no Government in this country, in my opinion, whether Liberal, Labour, or Conservative, will ever succeed in carrying through this House such a proposal unless the rights of the depressed classes and the outcasts in India are guaranteed under it. There are 50,000,000 of those people, out of 320,000,000. They have been among the best friends of law and order and British rule in India, they supplied in the War no mean contribution to India's effort in that War, and I say most emphatically that I do not believe that any Government in this country would have the power, even if it wanted to do so, to carry through a Bill conferring, in the future, anything like Dominion self-government in India unless in that Bill the lowest caste man enjoyed, in an electoral sense, equal rights with the highest caste man [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"] That is really the gist of the problem. We are really all at one in this, and I am glad to have the assenting cheers of hon. Members of the Labour party. What should, therefore, be the advice which this House—not the Government, nor we on this side, nor any section, but the House as a whole—ought to give to the Indian peoples—I use the word advisedly—and especially to the leaders of public opinion in the Assembly? It is this: We should say: If you want the day to come when there is to be something like Dominion self-government in India, you have to prepare the ground yourselves by removing educational and other disabilities from the depressed classes and from the outcasts, by removing their grievances, and by generally treating them as human beings ought to be treated in every community that calls itself civilised.

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER: I should like to congratulate the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton) on the moderation with which he has dealt to-night with the interests of one-fifth of the people of the globe, in whom we have a trusteeship. The difference between his remarks to-night and the unfortunate heat of his remarks on a previous occasion is as the difference between the footplate and the Court suit, and I hope that, when

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we are dealing with this question on another occasion, all speakers will remember the vast importance of what is said here to the people in India. We shall have no opportunity to debate this matter out fully, and I should like to have had the chance of giving experiences, which are possibly unique, concerning Indian labour that I have had, but I have seen Indian labour imported into another country, and then I have seen the results on that labour of living under different social conditions and getting better advantages. The labour that was imported from India into Natal was of a low class, but those who remained in South Africa and brought up their children there have now developed into a far better type of person. We shall find that in India also, if we give them better economic conditions, the whole race will improve. I think that we should bear that in mind, and watch what happens to the people when they have had better opportunities.

It being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Thursday, 15th May, 1924.

ROYAL ASSENT.

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to
Bombay, Baroda and Central India
Railway Act, 1924.

Monday, 19th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

SEDITION CHARGE, CAWNPORE.

1. Earl WINTERTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the actual terms of the charge in the case now being heard at Cawnpore against certain persons accused of sedition; and in what Court the case is being taken?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The accused persons are charged with conspiring to

deprive the King of the sovereignty of British India, an offence punishable under Section 121A of the Indian Penal Code. The trial is being held in the Court of Session at Cawnpore. I would like to make it quite clear that the accused persons are not being prosecuted merely for holding Communist views or carrying on Communistic propaganda. They are charged with having conspired to secure by violent revolution the complete separation of India from Imperialistic Britain, and in that endeavour they formed and attempted to make use of a Workers' and Peasants' Association in India.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the subscription list for the defence of these revolutionaries stands in the name of the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury)?

Mr. LANSBURY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that both prisoners and other persons deny that they are guilty of the offence for which they are being tried, and that many prisoners are not judged guilty until a verdict has been recorded against them? Does not the hon. Gentleman think it is a gross abuse of the privileges of this House to interfere in this way before the trial?

Mr. SPEAKER: These questions have nothing to do with the matter.

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: Having regard to the subscriptions by the Communist party, is there any evidence to show that this conspiracy has been engineered from this country?

Mr. RICHARDS: No.

Earl WINTERTON: Can the hon. Gentleman say when the inquiry is likely to be concluded?

Mr. RICHARDS: I understand the trial has already concluded. I expected the verdict on Friday last.

Earl WINTERTON: In view of the great importance of this matter, will the hon. Gentleman consider publishing a White Paper, or laying information on the Table, explaining what were the real facts about this very remarkable case?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will make that suggestion to my Noble Friend.

Mr. LANSBURY: Will the hon. Member also ask the Secretary of State to publish the whole of the evidence?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will do so.

TARIFF BOARD: STEEL INDUSTRY.

2. **Earl WINTERTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if it is the intention of the Government of India to introduce a Bill into the Indian Assembly during the present year to give effect to the recommendations of the Indian Tariff Committee; and, if so, what will be the approximate date of such introduction?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India propose to introduce a Bill in the Legislative Assembly about the end of this month on the lines of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Tariff Board regarding the grant of protection to the steel industry.

Earl WINTERTON: Will it be possible to communicate to the House the provisions of the Bill, either by putting a copy in the Library or in some other way, in view of the great interest taken in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will consider that.

Mr. WIGNALL: Can the hon. Gentleman say what steps have been taken, or are intended to be taken, to bring before the Legislative Council the serious effect of this tariff on the trade of this country?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like to remind my hon. Friend that where the Legislative Council of the Government of India have agreed upon questions affecting tariffs, the Secretary of State makes it a practice not to interfere.

RIOT, CAWNPORE.

4. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the reports in the Indian Press of the recent riot at Cawnpore when an order was given to the police to fire by an Indian magistrate; and if he can state what steps are being taken by the Government of India to protect these magistrates in the performance of their duty to the public from the attacks made upon them by extremist journals and non-official manifestoes?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen a paragraph on the subject in an English paper published in India. Flagrant cases of sedition and slander are constantly dealt

with and effective action can be, and is, taken against the authors. Whether in any particular instance such action is practicable and desirable can best be judged by the authorities immediately concerned. I have no reason to suppose that they neglect this duty.

Sir C. YATE: Can the hon. Gentleman give me any instance where this action has been taken?

BOLSHEVIK PROPAGANDA.

3. **Mr. BECKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can give any information to the House as to the continuance, or otherwise, of Russian Bolshevik propaganda in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Secretary of State has no evidence of any change in the situation in respect of Bolshevik propaganda.

Mr. W. THORNE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware of the tremendous amount of money that is being used by the other side in trying to down the principles of Socialism in this country?

CIVIL SERVICE (LEE COMMISSION REPORT).

5. **Mr. WALTER BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is intended to comply with the wish expressed in the Indian Legislative Assembly that the Report of the Lee Commission should be published simultaneously in India and England, and that no Orders thereon should be passed without the Report being discussed in that Assembly?

6. **Mr. MILLS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is intended to comply with the wish expressed in the Indian Legislative Assembly that the Report of the Lee Commission should be published simultaneously in India and England, and that no Orders thereon should be passed without the Report being discussed in that Assembly?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will answer these questions together. The answer to both parts of the question is in the affirmative.

ALIPORE CONSPIRACY (ARRESTS).

7. **Mr. MILLS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that seven young Bengalis were arrested in the Alipore conspiracy case

[Mr. Mills.]

between the 4th and 14th August, 1923, and put on trial on criminal charges involving capital punishment; that this trial took place before a judge and jury, and resulted on 17th April, 1924, in the unanimous verdict of the jury acquitting all seven accused, in which verdict the judge stated he concurred, and that, immediately after the judge had directed that they should be set at liberty, four of them were arrested under Bengal Regulation III, of 1818, and interned without any charge being made against them or any possibility of their insisting on being brought to trial; and whether, in view of the fact that these men have been in custody for eight months on charges of which, after trial, they have been found not guilty, he will give instructions for their immediate release?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware of this matter, and I understand that the facts are stated with substantial accuracy in the question. My Noble Friend is at present awaiting further information from the Government of India, and expects to receive it by an early mail.

Mr. MILLS: Will the Secretary of State also make inquiries into the manner in which confessing prisoners who turned King's evidence were kept in close seclusion for three or four weeks pending

their evidence, which was subsequently proved to be police-manufactured and false?

Captain BERKELEY: Are we to understand that the Government acquiesces in the invocation of a regulation more than 100 years old in order to deprive British subjects of their immemorial rights to a fair and speedy trial?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend is awaiting further information on the subject.

ARMY (PAY).

9. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the consolidated monthly rupee allowances now granted to married soldiers serving in India are equal in all respects to those granted at home; and if the calculations supplied to him to the effect that married warrant, non-commissioned officers and men serving in India lose, respectively, £49 14s., £20 12s. 6d., and £16 2s. 6d. per annum have been verified, and with what result?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am circulating in the OFFICIAL REPORT a table, giving a comparison between the pay and allowances of these ranks at home and in India.

Following is the table:

COMPARISON OF THE PAY AND ALLOWANCES OF BRITISH SOLDIERS SERVING IN INDIA AND AT HOME.

Warrant Officer Class II. with wife and two children.

In England.	For month of 30 days.	In India.	Per month.
Equivalent at 1s. 5d.* the rupee to ...	£21 7s. 7d. Rs. 301.13.1	— —	— Rs. 321.5.3
<i>Sergeant with wife and three children.</i>			
Equivalent at 1s. 5d.* the rupee to ...	£14 6s. 1d. Rs. 201.15.0	— —	— Rs. 224.14.1
<i>Private with wife and three children.</i>			
Equivalent at 1s. 5d.* the rupee to ...	£9 1s. 1d. Rs. 127.13.1	— —	— Rs. 150.12.1

* The rate of exchange for the rupee is at present approximately 1s. 5d.

10. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the calculations supplied to him, showing that a married lieutenant ordered to India of over seven years' service loses pay at the rate of £63 per annum and under seven years' service £68 per annum, and that married quartermasters, whose pay

depends on length of service as such, lose by service in India in every grade, have now been verified; and will he state what is the exact disparity between the home and Indian rates of pay in the case of these married lieutenants and quartermasters.

Mr. RICHARDS: I am circulating in the OFFICIAL REPORT a table giving a comparison between the pay of these officers at home and in India. I understand that very few lieutenants in this country are in receipt of pay as married officers. The hon. and gallant Member is of course aware that a comparison of this kind without reference to other con-

siderations such as the level of prices in the two countries may be misleading.

Sir C. YATE: Is it realised that the cost of living in India has enormously increased?

Mr. RICHARDS: Allowance has been made for that.

Following is the table promised:

COMPARISON of the monthly pay and allowances of married regimental Lieutenants of the British Service at home and in India.

	British pay and allowances, less British Income Tax converted at 1s. 5d.*	Indian pay, less Indian Income Tax.	Superiority of British over Indian pay.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Lieutenant :			
On promotion	524 - -	460 3 -	63 13 - (£54 4s. 10d. p.a.)
After 7 years' service ...	581 14 -	532 13 -	49 1 - (£41 14s. 1d. p.a.)

Second Lieutenant and Lieutenant (except those of Quartermaster class) who are married, and who were commissioned after serving in the ranks on normal peace attestations and who were married when so commissioned receive with the above Indian rates of pay a marriage allowance of Rs. 100 p.m. for the wife and Rs. 25 p.m. for each child, subject to maximum of Rs. 150 p.m.

COMPARISON of monthly pay and allowances of married officers of the Quartermaster class (British Service) at home and in India.

	British pay and allowances, less British Income Tax converted at 1s. 5d.*	Indian pay, less Indian Income Tax.	Superiority of British over Indian pay.
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
Quartermaster :			
On appointment	581 14 -	532 13 -	49 1 - (£41 14s. 1d. p.a.)
After 4 years' commissioned service.	620 8 -	581 4 -	39 4 - (£33 7s. 3d. p.a.)
After 8 years' commissioned service.	718 2 -	678 2 -	40 - - (£34 p.a.)
			Superiority of Indian over British pay.
			Rs. a. p.
After 12 years' commissioned service.	756 11 -	775 - -	18 5 - (£15 11s. 4d. p.a.)
After 15 years' commissioned service.	847 8 -	857 13 -	10 5 - (£8 15s. 4d. p.a.)
Lieutenant-Colonel	933 2 -	953 2 -	20 - - (£17 p.a.)

* The exchange value of the rupee is at present approximately 1s. 5d.

MINES (CHILD LABOUR).

12. Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many children are employed in underground work in mines in India, and what

are the minimum and average ages of such children?

Mr. RICHARDS: The number of children below 12 years of age employed in underground work in mines in British

Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom" for the month and three months ended 31st March last.

Tuesday, 20th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BRITISH ARMY.

LIEUTENANT C. H. CLENDINING.

32. **Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK** asked the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the statutory right of an officer in any inquiry affecting his character or military reputation to have full opportunity to be present throughout that inquiry and to make any statement, give any evidence he may wish to produce and cross-examine witnesses, he will arrange that Lieutenant Clendining shall be given this opportunity in any inquiry into the circumstances of his detention as an alleged lunatic?

33 and 34. **Mr. HEALY** asked the Secretary of State for War (1) if his attention has been called to the application made by Lieutenant C. H. Clendining, 3rd Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, on the 5th August, 1917, for copies of the statements made by Lieutenant McElwee, of that regiment, against him, which he alleges are false; and if he can explain why the military authorities in India refused to supply Lieutenant Clendining with copies of these statements;

(2) if his attention has been called to the fact that Lieutenant McElwee, of the Royal Irish Rifles, pleaded guilty to a charge of housebreaking and jewel theft before the Recorder at the Dublin City Sessions in May, 1921; and if he will make inquiries if this officer is identical with the Lieutenant McElwee, of the Royal Irish Rifles, accused by Lieutenant Clendining, of that regiment, with supplying false information with a view to getting him certified as insane?

Mr. WALSH: As I indicated in reply to the Noble Lord and the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury) on 6th May, I have just received a report from India on the case of Lieutenant

Clendining, and I am now engaged in examining, under Section 42 of the Army Act, the complaint which this officer has made. As soon as my examination is complete I will inform the hon. Members of my conclusions, but in the meantime I am not in a position to deal piecemeal with details of a matter which is still *sub judice*. I will bear in mind the question of the identity of Lieutenant McElwee, should it prove relevant. With regard to question No. 32, I would point out that the statutory right in question relates to Courts of Inquiry, not to an examination into a complaint by the Army Council, under Section 42 of the Army Act.

Lord H. CAVENDISH-BENTINCK:

Does my right hon. Friend contemplate that in his examination of this case Lieutenant Clendining is not to appear in his own defence and is not to be allowed to call witnesses in his own defence; and is such a one-sided examination to be considered satisfactory?

Mr. WALSH: I stated a few days ago in this House emphatically that I was going into the whole details of this case by myself to begin with. I made a definite promise to the Noble Lord and to my hon. Friend the Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury) to that effect, and I was cheered by both in doing so. I promised that examination would be undertaken by me under Section 42 of the Army Act. That course I intend to carry out, but I cannot at present say what later developments may take place.

Mr. PRINGLE: Could the right hon. Gentleman give any indication as to when his inquiry will be concluded?

Mr. WALSH: I could not.

Mr. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow witnesses for Lieutenant Clendining to be examined?

Mr. WALSH: I have repeatedly stated that under Section 42, witnesses of the kind indicated are not permissible. It is, first of all, an investigation by the Army Council; a report is then made by the Secretary of State to His Majesty, and His Majesty takes such action as he considers right thereon. That is the whole purport of Section 42 and that is the promise I have made.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

IMPORT DUTIES (STEEL).

Sir F. WISE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the percentage per ton of Import Duty suggested by the Tariff Board on steel into India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The information desired is contained in a statement, covering five printed pages, appended to the Second Report of the Indian Tariff Board, a copy of which I shall be glad to send to the hon. Member.

RAILWAY WAGONS (BOUNTY).

Sir F. WISE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the suggested bounty on railway wagons manufactured in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The following table shows the bounties recommended by the Indian Tariff Board:

	Number of wagons on which the bounty will be payable.	Amount of bounty per wagon.	Cost of the bounty.
		Rs.	Rs. lakhs.
First year	800	850	6·80
Second year	1,000	700	7·00
Third year	1,200	580	6·96
Fourth year	1,400	500	7·00
Fifth year	1,600	440	7·04

The Bill, prepared by the Government of India in pursuance of the recommendations of the Tariff Board, contains the following Clause:

"4.—(1) The Governor - General in Council may in each of the financial years commencing on the 1st day of April, 1924, 1925, and 1926, pay such sum, not exceeding seven lakhs of rupees in any one financial year, as he thinks fit, by way of bounties upon iron or steel wagons in respect of each of which he is satisfied:

"(a) that it is suitable for the public carriage of animals or goods on a railway in India; and

"(b) that a substantial portion of the component parts thereof has been manufactured in British India.

"(2) The Governor-General in Council may, by notification in the *Gazette of*

India, prescribe the conditions subject to which and the manner in which such bounties may be paid."

Wednesday, 21st May, 1924

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

INDIA STORES DEPOT (INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE).

31. Mr. HOFFMAN asked the Minister of Labour if he is aware of the dispute existing between the men employed at the India stores depot, who are in receipt of wages amounting to from 44s. to 48s. per week, and the Indian Government; if his Department has offered its services to try and secure a settlement; and, if so, with what result?

Mr. SHAW: The dispute has been reported to me by the Union, and I am at present in communication with the High Commissioner for India in the matter.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

EAST INDIAN WOOL (DISINFECTION).

Mr. MILNE asked the Minister of Health whether it is the intention of the Government to make it compulsory that East Indian wool imported into this country should be disinfected; whether he is aware that the carpet trade has stated that the cost of this disinfection would be 3·05d. per pound, and that as a result the article secured would be inferior, thereby resulting in a serious handicap upon the carpet trades in this country; and whether, under the circumstances, he will suspend the bringing of such an order into force pending a full and proper inquiry into the whole matter?

Mr. DAVIES: I have been asked to reply to this question. The whole matter is receiving careful consideration. The figure of 3·05d. per pound was put forward

by a deputation of manufacturers recently received by me. The calculations on which it is based are being scrutinised. On my present information, I am by no means prepared to admit that the additional cost due to disinfection would be anything like this figure.

ROYAL INDIAN MARINE.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he has now considered the scheme for the reorganisation of the Royal Indian Marine on a combatant basis; and what decision has been arrived at?

Mr. RICHARDS: The future of the Royal Indian Marine is still under discussion with the Government of India.

Thursday, 22nd May, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

PROVINCIAL SERVICES (PRO-PORTIONATE PENSIONS).

Sir W. JOYNSON-HICKS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any steps have been taken, in accordance with the original despatch on reforms by the Indian Government, to permit officers at present in the provincial services who, like their colleagues in the covenanted services, find their position intolerable owing to the reforms, to receive proportionate pensions; and whether he is aware that there are a considerable number of Englishmen in these services anxiously waiting a decision of the Indian Government?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is true that the original proposals of the Government of India for the grant of proportionate pensions in the last resort to an officer who found his position under the reforms intolerable were not limited in their scope to any one class of officers, nor was the similar recommendation of the Joint Committee on the Bill of 1919. The general offer of retirement on proportionate pensions on a prescribed scale which was published in 1921, was, however, limited to members of the All-India Services in recognition of the greater degree of responsibility of the Secretary of State

for India for those Services with the members of which he has in fact as well as in theory entered into contract

Friday, 23rd May, 1924.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS

Indian Affairs,

That they propose that the Joint Committee on Indian Affairs do meet in Committee Room A on Tuesday next, at half-past Twelve o'Clock

INDIAN AFFAIRS.

So much of the Lords Message as relates to the time and place of meeting of the Joint Committee on Indian Affairs, considered

Ordered, "That the Committee appointed by this House do meet the Lords Committee as proposed by their Lordships."—[*Mr. Spoor.*]

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Monday, 26th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

ARRESTS (MR. PATHIK AND MR. CHODHRI).

1 **Mr BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the president (Mr. Pathik) and the secretary (Mr. Chodhri) of the Society of Servants of Rajasthan have been arrested on the grounds of sedition; that Mr. Pathik is still awaiting trial, although arrested about eight months ago; that the society in question is non-violent and law-abiding, and is formed for the mutual service of villagers, and that peaceful and unarmed men and women have been suddenly attacked and beaten with lathis at Amergarh and twice fired on at Begun; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the circumstances which gave rise to these incidents?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I am not at present in possession of official informa-

[Mr. Richards.]

tion in regard to all these matters; but I have seen a report that Mr. Pathik was arrested by the authorities of the Udaipur State in September last in connection with recent disturbances in that State and in Bundi. I understand that in both States the local troops and police forces had to repel attacks made by armed mobs, and that the disturbances were provoked by Mr. Pathik and other outside agitators. I observe that, in answer to a question on this subject in the Legislative Assembly on the 25th March, the Government of India promised to make inquiries into the circumstances of the arrests, and I will ask them to let me know the results of those inquiries.

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: Are native States themselves not perfectly entitled to withstand any attack?

COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

2. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what facilities are open to the people of India to enable students to secure a training in industrial and commercial pursuits; and whether he will supply a list of the technical schools in India where a first-rate economic and commercial education can be obtained?

Mr. RICHARDS: Detailed information regarding facilities for industrial and commercial training provided in Government educational institutions in India is given in the Review of the Progress of Education in India, 1917-22, of which I am sending a copy to the hon. Member. In the year 1921-22, 276 institutions of the kind were being maintained, with 14,082 students. A complete list of all these institutions could not be obtained without reference to each of the local Governments in India which are separately responsible for education.

3. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether degrees in commerce and engineering are obtainable in India by Indian students; and, if so, whether there are any obstacles which prevent such qualified students practising their professions within British India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative; to the second part in the negative.

BRITISH TROOPS (PAY).

4. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, con-

sidering that the rates of pay of British service officers and men of the Army in India are based upon the rates in operation in the United Kingdom upon a basis of 2s. to the rupee, and that the present rate of exchange is under 1s. 5d. to the rupee, the revision of pay on 1st July next will be based on the rate of exchange then in existence or on the 1s. 4d. rate?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not yet in a position to say how the exchange problem will be met in the revision of the pay of commissioned ranks, which is due on 1st July next. Other ranks at present receive in effect British rates converted at 1s. 4d.

RAILWAY RISK NOTES REVISION COMMITTEE.

5. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India when it is proposed to take action to give effect to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Railway Risk Notes Revision Committee; and can he explain the reason for the delay in dealing with this subject?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India stated in February last that the forms had been revised in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee, and that steps were being taken to introduce them.

RANI SAHEBA OF BASTAR.

6. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that indignation prevails in Bastar State, Central Provinces, owing to the action of the political agent, who, contrary to the wishes of all concerned, has arranged the marriage of the Rani Saheba of Bastar, in Mayurbhanj State, in Orissa, with a son of a Girjadar, who is the cousin of the Maharajah; and why such an interference in the private personal affairs of the parties concerned has taken place?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information to the effect indicated in the question, but he will make inquiry.

CURRENCY.

7. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what steps the Government propose to take to meet the demand of the people of India to transfer the funds standing to the credit of the gold standard reserve in London to India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The reserve is at present held in the form of sterling investments which could not suitably be held elsewhere than in the United Kingdom.

9. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the Indian merchants have demanded that the Indian Currency Act should be amended by substituting the rate of exchange to be 1s. 6d. instead of 2s., what steps is it proposed to take in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I assume my hon. Friend is referring to the views of the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, advocating the restoration of the pre-War rating of the rupee at 1s. 4d. gold. The Government of India have explained at length in a letter dated the 25th January to the chamber their reasons for holding that in the existing uncertainty of world economic conditions it would be inexpedient to make any immediate attempt to fix the future gold value of the rupee. My Noble Friend concurs in this view.

Mr. A. M. SAMUEL: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Indian Government failed to maintain the rupee at 2s., and, that being so, would he ask the hon. Gentleman who put the question, how he would propose to maintain the rupee at 1s. 6d., seeing that the natural balance of trade even now only maintains the rupee at 1s. 4½d.?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not for the Minister to question an hon. Member.

12. **Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that opinion in India favours the establishment of a gold standard and the opening of the Mint for providing gold coinage; and whether he will state the intentions of the Government in regard to these matters?

Mr. RICHARDS: While the effective restoration of the gold standard is the objective of Government policy, economic conditions throughout the world have not yet reached a degree of normality which would justify at present an attempt to stabilise the gold value of the rupee. In present circumstances, owing to the existing premium on gold in India, the question of the internal circulation of gold currency does not arise.

Mr. SAMUEL: Is it not a fact that gold has been pouring into India for tens of centuries, and that it is always made into ornaments, and disappears from circulation? Is he aware that a drain of gold to India would injure our own gold reserves, sinking into the quicksands of India without going into circulation as currency? What then would be the use of coining gold?

14. **Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau of Bombay suggested to the Government that at least 17 crores of rupees worth of currency notes should be issued as emergency currency to meet the seasonal demands at 5 per cent., 5½ per cent., and 6 per cent. instead of 12 crores of rupees only at 6 per cent., 7 per cent., and 8 per cent.; why that suggestion was not adopted; and what are the intentions of the Government for the future?

41. **Mr. T. WILLIAMS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to take any steps, and, if so, what steps will be taken, to prevent a recurrence of a great stringency in the money market in India leading to a rise in the bank rate of interest from 4 per cent. to 9 per cent., and to a consequent demoralisation in the trade and industries of that country?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware that in April, 1923, when the note circulation was about 170 crores of rupees, the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, suggested that additional currency should be issuable up to 10 per cent. of the note issue at rates varying from 6 to 7 per cent. The actual decisions embodied in the Paper Currency Amendment Act and rules thereunder were taken after careful consideration of the views of various representative bodies in India. In addition to expanding the currency up to 12 crores of rupees against commercial bills, a further expansion of 12 crores was effected this busy season against sterling securities in London, making a total expansion of 24 crores this winter. The important problem referred to in these questions is being carefully watched by the Government of India.

Mr. SAMUEL: With regard to Question 41, am I to understand that the

[Mr. Richards.]

Secretary of State for India acquiesces in the statement in the hon. Member's question that there is disaster in the trade and industries of India? Is he not aware that the total of the trade in and out of India is now higher than ever it was, except in the boom years of 1919, 1920 and 1921? Is there any ground for the implication contained in the question, No. 41?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no demoralisation.

RAILWAYS (STATE MANAGEMENT).

8. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, what action, if any, has been taken to give effect to the decision of the Government of India on the resolution passed by the Indian Legislative Assembly for taking over, under State management, the East Indian and Great Indian Peninsula Railways from their respective companies on the expiry of their present terms of lease?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer which I gave to the hon. and gallant Member for the Melton Division (Sir C. Yate) on the 10th March last.

MILITARY SCHOOLS.

10 **Mr. MONTAGUE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the resolutions passed at the Maratha Educational Conference, held at Morsi, in the Berars, on the 21st April, calling upon the Government to establish military schools for the education of fighting races with accommodation for Maratha youths, etc.: and whether he will consider the advisability of urging the Government of India to take action on the lines proposed?

Mr. RICHARDS: On the information as yet available, my Noble Friend is unable to form any opinion on the proposal.

ARMY (INDIANISATION).

11. **Mr. R. JACKSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to reconsider the question of the Indianisation of the superior ranks of the Indian Army?

40. **Mr. T. WILLIAMS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India

whether it is proposed to reconsider the question of the Indianisation of the superior ranks of the Indian Army?

Mr. RICHARDS: The process of Indianisation of the superior ranks of the Indian Army which was recently inaugurated is not yet sufficiently advanced to make it necessary to consider what form the later stages are likely to take.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY).

13. **Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Committee appointed by the Government of India to go into the question of the working of the reforms has yet reported; and, if so, whether a copy of the Report will be laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend understands that the Committee of Inquiry which has been appointed by the Government of India has completed the preliminary stages of the work, that is to say, the investigation of the legal and constitutional practicability of action under the Government of India Act, and that the Government are now in a position to proceed to the next stage, namely, to consider what recommendations, if any, can be made for action within these lines. My Noble Friend has not received the Report of the conclusions arrived at in this preliminary stage, which must be of a purely formal character, nor would he consider it useful to lay a copy of it upon the Table of the House. The House will be fully informed in due course of any material results of the Inquiry that may affect considerations of policy.

Earl WINTERTON: Do I understand that it is the intention of the Government to provide the House with the Report at the earliest convenience at some later date, and is it their intention to give a copy of this Report to the Standing Joint Committee?

Mr. RICHARDS: The question refers to the inquiries that have been already completed, and the answer to that is there would be no useful purpose in laying a copy of the Report upon the Table.

Sir HENRY CRAIK: Is it not the case that one of the functions of the Standing

Joint Committee is to consider and report on any proposed changes?

Earl WINTERTON: How are we to understand the further Report which is going to be published unless we see this Report, on which the further Report is to be founded?

Mr. RICHARDS: I think the Noble Lord had better wait until he sees the Report.

Earl WINTERTON (*by Private Notice*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the published forms of reference of the Committee set up by the Government of India to inquire into the working of the Government of India Act includes the power to recommend amendments to that Act in order to rectify administrative imperfections, he can state if the Committee will report to the Viceroy or the Secretary of State, and whether there is any precedent for entrusting to an official Committee, which has on it no Member of this House or of another place, the duty of suggesting alterations in an Act of Parliament?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the Noble Lord's question is that the Committee will report to the Government of India, by whom it will be appointed. As regards the second part, the terms of reference to this Committee were closely foreshadowed in the speeches of Sir Malcolm Hailey in the Legislative Assembly on the 8th and 18th February, the relevant extracts from which were circulated in the OFFICIAL REPORT of this House of 3rd March. It was then indicated as possible that the proposed inquiry might "show that some changes are required in the structure of the Act in order to rectify definite and ascertained defects experienced in actual working," as distinct from changes involving amendment of the Constitution. I have had no time to search for actual precedents, but I have little doubt that alterations in Acts of Parliament have frequently been, and will frequently be, suggested by Committees containing no Member of either House of Parliament.

Earl WINTERTON: Am I to understand the hon. Gentleman to say that the constitution of the Committee was foreshadowed in the speech which he made in this House in March?

Mr. RICHARDS: No; I said the terms of reference.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Are not the terms of reference somewhat wider than the hon. Member foreshadowed in his former speech?

Sir H. CRAIK: Can the hon. Gentleman say when this Report will be submitted to the Joint Committee, which was established for the purpose of considering such questions?

Mr. RICHARDS: I think we had better wait for the Report.

Earl WINTERTON: I beg to give Notice that I will raise this question on the Adjournment.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

42. **Mr. LINFIELD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what action, if any, the Government proposes to take on the Report of the North-West Frontier Committee; and whether this Report was received from the Government of India in 1922?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend is awaiting the proposals of the Government of India on this matter, and I am, therefore, not in a position to answer the first part of the question. The Report was first received here in December, 1922.

TAXATION (COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY).

43. **Mr. LINFIELD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what action has been taken by the Government of India for the appointment of the proposed Committee of Inquiry on Central and Provincial Taxation; who are the Members of that Committee; and what are the Terms of Reference?

Mr. RICHARDS: The intention of the Government of India is to constitute the Committee in the autumn. It will be constituted as follows:

Chairman:

Sir Charles Todhunter, I.C.S.

Members:

Sir Percy Thompson, Deputy-Chairman of the British Board of Inland Revenue.

The Maharajahdhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan.

Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Professor of the Fergusson College, Poona.

[Mr. Richards.]

I am sending the hon. Member a copy of the Terms of Reference, which I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

The Term of Reference are as follow:

(1) To examine the manner in which the burden of taxation is distributed at present between the different classes of the population.

(2) To consider whether the whole scheme of taxation—central, provincial and local—is equitable and in accordance with economic principles and, if not, in what respects it is defective.

(3) To report on the suitability of alternative sources of taxation.

(4) To advise as to the machinery required for the imposition, assessment and collection of taxes, old and new.

(5) To prepare rough estimates of the financial effects of the proposals.

(6) To include in the inquiry consideration of the land revenue only so far as is necessary for a comprehensive survey of existing conditions.

CHelsea PENSIONERS.

44. Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has considered the letter addressed to him by the president of the European Association of Calcutta, on 5th April last, regarding the difficult conditions under which Chelsea pensioners are residing in India; and if he can state what action is being taken in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have brought the association's letter to the notice of my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, to whom any further inquiries should be addressed.

Sir C. YATE: Can the Under-Secretary say whether he can do anything to help these military pensioners?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am afraid that I cannot add anything to my answer.

ASSAM (RECRUITMENT OF LABOUR).

45. Mr. SNELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, in the recruitment of emigrants from the ceded districts of Madras for the Assam Tea Estates, no agreements are given to employes, the agents at the depot are only expected to read a questionnaire to the intending emigrants and to take their thumb impressions, and a

male coolie who has worked or been in a tea garden for only 15 days can become a sirdar or a female coolie a sirdarini by undertaking to recruit coolies; and whether he will take steps to secure the publication of the questionnaire referred to and the avoidance of abuses in the matter of such recruitment?

Mr. RICHARDS: If my hon. Friend will communicate with me regarding the particular cases and questionnaire which he has in mind, the matter can be inquired into, but I do not at present fully understand the nature of the abuses which he apprehends in free recruitment of the kind which he describes.

46. Mr. SNELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, under the Assam Emigration Act (No. VI. of 1901), the Workmen's Breach of Contract Act (No. XIII. of 1859, amended in 1920), and Section 492 of the Indian Penal Code, a workman can be compelled to work for an employer with whom he has made an agreement for service, and that in case of refusal he may be punished with imprisonment as a criminal offender; that by an agreement entered into by members of the planters' association in Assam all labourers living within the area of a particular garden are considered coolies of that garden, and the employment of labourers of one garden by another is prohibited under penalties, and that an outsider makes himself liable for prosecution for trespass if he should approach a labourer on any tea garden in Assam, thus making it impossible to start any agency for social, religious, or educational work without the express permission of the managers of the tea gardens; and whether he will take steps to secure the repeal of the Acts referred to and the enactment of legislation regulating the conditions of life and work on tea gardens in India, and for the proper inspection of such conditions?

Mr. RICHARDS: As the answer is somewhat long, I will, with my hon. Friend's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

The following is the answer:

The penal provisions of the Assam Labour and Emigration Act have been withdrawn. Under the Workmen's Breach of Contract Act as amended in

1920 a workman who has received an advance of money on account of work which he has contracted to perform and is proved to have refused without reasonable excuse to perform it, may in the discretion of the magistrate be ordered to do so or to repay the advance or part of it, and may be sentenced to imprisonment not exceeding three months if he fail to comply with the order. Section 492 of the Indian Penal Code provides a penalty of one month's imprisonment or fine for unreasonable refusal to perform work contracted for at a place to which the workman has been conveyed at another person's expense. I am not aware of any prohibition of the freedom of movement and employment in Assam such as is suggested in the second part of the question. As regards the third part of the question, the Government of India have decided to repeal the Workmen's Breach of Contract Act with effect from 1st April, 1926. The question of Section 492 of the Penal Code, which I understand is rarely used, has also been under consideration, and my Noble Friend will inquire how the matter stands

LORD OLIVIER (LETTER).

47. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the letter written by the Secretary of State for India to Mr. Satyamurthi, a Swarajist member of the Madras Legislative Council; and whether this letter was published with the consent of the Secretary of State?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part is in the affirmative and to the second that my noble Friend's consent was neither asked, granted nor refused.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is not the proper channel for such a communication through the Government of India, and can the hon. Gentleman state whether there is any precedent for an important communication of policy being made by the Secretary of State for India in such an unorthodox manner?

Mr. RICHARDS: I do not understand that there is anything in the letter beyond what was stated by Noble Friend in his speech in another place.

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: Is it not a fact that the new policy announced by the

Secretary of State cuts at the root of representation under the existing Statute, and should not an important new declaration of policy of that kind be made in this House rather than to a private individual in India?

Viscount CURZON: Is it not a fact that Mr. Satyamurthi is an extreme co-operator, and how can he come under the definition of the Secretary of State when he said the Government would co-operate with those who were willing to co-operate with them?

Sir HENRY CRAIK: Is not this precisely one of the points which was referred to the Joint Committee of the House of Lords and the House of Commons, upon which a Report was made, and before any change of policy is made by the Secretary of State should not the question be again referred to that Joint Committee? I ask the hon. Member to make a statement on that point.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that there is another question on this subject.

Sir H. CRAIK: It is quite different.

Earl WINTERTON: My question is not on the same subject.

Sir H. CRAIK: I ask the Under-Secretary for a distinct statement of policy on this point.

Mr. RICHARDS: If hon. Members will read the speech which my Noble Friend made in February, they will find all their points mentioned.

Sir H. CRAIK: Is it not the case that this very question dealt with in the letter was decided in a particular way by the Joint Committee, and that the decision still prevails?

Viscount CURZON: Before any action is taken to change the policy, will it be again referred to the Joint Committee? Upon that point the hon. Gentleman has not replied.

Mr. RICHARDS: I have nothing to add to my answer.

Earl WINTERTON: I give the hon. Gentleman notice that, in view of the difficulty of extracting any information from him on this point, I shall endeavour to raise this question on the Motion for the Adjournment for the Whitsuntide Recess.

CAWNPORE CONSPIRACY TRIAL.

48. **Earl WINTERTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if the Judge's decision in the Cawnpore conspiracy trial has been given?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Judge has convicted Muzaffar Ahmad, Shaukat Usmani, Dange and Nalini Gupta and sentenced them each to four years' rigorous imprisonment. The charge against Gulam Husain was withdrawn. Proceedings against Singaravelu Chettiar were suspended owing to his ill health; and his request to be tried in Madras or Bombay is being considered.

Earl WINTERTON: Has the hon. Gentleman come to any decision with regard to the question I placed last week, whether, in view of the great interest taken in this House and in India, he will publish a White Paper showing the ramifications of this case, and the fund from which the defence was paid?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like notice of that question.

Mr. LANSBURY: In publishing that White Paper, will the hon. Gentleman also publish the evidence upon which these men were convicted?

Earl WINTERTON: Do I understand that if I put a question down next week the hon. Gentleman will be able to give me a definite answer?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will endeavour to give an answer.

FOREST SERVICE (PROBATIONERS).

49 and 50. **Mr. RAWLINSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India (1) whether any, and what, new arrangements have been made, or are proposed, for the selection of probationers for the Indian forest service; and whether graduates of any university will still continue to be eligible for selection without further conditions being imposed;

(2) whether any new arrangements have been made, or are proposed, for the training of probationers for the Indian forest service; whether such probationers will still continue to be able to be trained at any university having a forestry department, or whether they will be compelled to be trained at Oxford; and, if so, whether an opportunity of discussing the question in the House will be given before any such regulation comes into force?

Mr. RICHARDS: The question of the training of forest probationers has been under consideration for some time, but this is closely connected with the question of the future of the service. Recommendations on this subject have been made by the Royal Commission, presided over by Lord Lee, whose report will be published to-morrow. Until these recommendations have been considered by the Government of India, my Noble Friend is unable to make any statement.

Mr. RAWLINSON: Up to the present has any alteration been made in the existing state of affairs, first as regards selected candidates, and, secondly, as regards their training, because large sums of money appear to have been spent upon them?

Mr. RICHARDS: No.

Sir H. CRAIK: Has any Regulation been made confining the training of these candidates to the University of Oxford to the exclusion of other Universities?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not aware of it.

Mr. J. JONES: May I ask if there is ever going to be any alteration, and are we always going to keep on in the same old way?

Mr. RAWLINSON: If I put down a question a week hence, will the Under-Secretary endeavour to give me an answer?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes, I will endeavour to do so.

CEYLON (SHAUKAT ALI AND DR. KITCHLEW).

ILLNESS OF MR THOMAS.

51. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can now state the result of his communication with the Governor of Ceylon regarding the statements made by Shaukat Ali and Dr. Kitchlew in which they described English statesmen as damned liars and hypocrites, and stated that a lakh of Englishmen did not require much killing; and what action is to be taken in the matter?

Mr. LUNN: I regret to inform the House that my right hon. Friend has been taken ill rather suddenly. I hope it is not serious. I have to apologise for his absence, and I have been asked to take his questions.

The Secretary of State has received a Report from the Governor, who states that he fully considered the matter prior to the arrival in Ceylon of these persons, whose chief object appeared to be to collect funds, and decided that no action should be taken to prevent their landing in the Colony. They have now left the Colony, and the Governor states that the political effect of their visit has been extremely small. The Secretary of State sees no reason to take any further action in the matter.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Can the hon. Gentleman say if these statements were made before he took office?

Mr. LUNN: I think I should explain that these answers were drafted for my right hon. Friend, and have been just handed to me.

Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY: Is not the hon. Gentleman aware that they were certainly made before he took office?

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

IMPORTED MOTOR CARS.

Commander BELLAIRS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the imports of motor and commercial cars to India from Great Britain, Canada and the United States, respectively, for 1921, 1922 and 1923?

Mr. RICHARDS: The following table shows the imports into India of motor cars (including taxi cabs) from the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States, respectively, during the years 1921, 1922 and 1923:—

	Number.			Value.		
	1921.	1922.	1923.	1921.	1922.	1923.
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
From United Kingdom ...	1,242	555	722	1,31 63,019	45,35,520	36 14,117
From Canada ...	932	1,655	2,876	27,92,657	33,14,595	54 42,450
From United States of America	1,680	1,450	2,270	93,73,164	49 52,314	55 46,019

The India trade returns for the calendar years do not show the origin of imports of commercial cars (*i.e.*, motor omnibuses,

motor cars and motor lorries). The total imports during the years in question were:

	Number			Value.		
	1921	1922.	1923.	1921.	1922.	1923
				Rs	Rs	Rs
	1,073	650	836	77,92,279	25,17,949	22,70,289

The following table, however, shows the imports, during the fiscal years 1920-21, 1921-22 and 1922-23 of commercial cars

from the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States respectively:

	Number.			Value.		
	1920-21	1921-22	1922-23.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
From United Kingdom ...	594	135	92	67,48,530	14,63,898	10,36,767
From Canada ...	382	275	210	12,64,550	6,03,083	3,55,941
From United States of America	1,396	106	133	97,98,960	6,11,117	5,66,938

Tuesday, 27th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

ARMY OFFICERS' PAY.

31 and 32. **Sir P. RICHARDSON** asked the Secretary of State for War (1) whether he proposes to secure for married officers over 30 years of age in India the same married allowances as they would receive if they were serving in England;

(2) whether, seeing that military pay and allowances in India are based upon an assumed exchange of 10 rupees to the £, and that the rupee is only worth 1s. 4d., readjustments of pay will be made to relieve recipients of the burden imposed upon them by the greatly increased cost of living in India?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Robert Richards): I am answering these questions at the request of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War. The revision of pay of military officers in India is being considered with special reference to the position of married officers under the War Office system of pay and to the exchange problem, but it will be some time before any announcement can be made.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ARMY OFFICERS (TRAVELLING CONCESSIONS).

Sir P. RICHARDSON asked the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the greatly increased cost of steamship travel, he will grant to officers serving in India free passages home for themselves and their families upon their retirement?

Mr. RICHARDS: Concessions to officers of the Indian Service in regard to passages such as the hon. Member suggests will naturally come up for consideration in connection with the impending revision of conditions of service in India.

Wednesday, 28th May, 1924.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make provision with respect to leave of absence from India of the Governor-General, Commander-in-Chief, Governors and members of Executive Councils, and with respect to the appointment of Commander-in-Chief." [Government of India (Leave of Absence) Bill [*Lords.*]]

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS (PENSIONS).

Sir H. CAYZER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the claims of those officers of the Indian Civil Services who retired prior to the 23rd July, 1913, and consequently do not enjoy the increase of pension granted to retired officers of the Indian Civil Service; and whether he is prepared to recommend the appointment of an independent tribunal to inquire into the claims of those retired officers?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is not the case that any increase of pension has been granted to retired members of the Indian Civil Service. The hon. and gallant Member may, however, have in mind the claim of those members of services of the Government of India other than the Indian Civil Service who retired before 23rd July, 1913, that they should be allowed the benefit of the higher scale of maximum pensions granted to officers who retired after that date. For reasons given in my predecessor's reply to the hon. Member for Stroud on the 15th May, 1923, this claim has been rejected. It has received exhaustive and impartial consideration by three successive Secretaries of State, and my Noble Friend is not prepared to refer the question to an independent tribunal.

Thursday, 29th May, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

NON-CO-OPERATION PARTY.

47. Lieut. - Colonel Sir FREDERICK HALL asked the Prime Minister whether the statement of the Secretary of State for India as to the desirability of the Imperial Government getting into closer touch with the Non-Co operation party in India was made with the approval of the Cabinet; if he will state whether the Government propose to take action in the direction of an extension of Home Rule in India; and when he proposes to make a statement as to the Government's policy in this matter?

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (Mr. Clynes):

I am not aware that the Secretary of State for India has made any statement in the language set out in the hon. and gallant Member's question. My noble Friend, with the approval of his colleagues in the Government, said in another place, on the 26th February last that His Majesty's Government were earnestly desirous of availing themselves of any disposition towards effective consultation, and were open to consider any practical proposals for establishing closer contact and better understanding. In reply to the second part of the question the Government are not at present prepared to make any proposals for action in the direction of an extension of Home Rule in India.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is this an example of the new methods of the Government communicating Cabinet decisions to the people in India?

Mr. CLYNES: It is not.

Viscount CURZON: Are we to understand that the Government view with approval the action of the Secretary of State in communicating direct with this extremist leader in India?

Mr. CLYNES: My Noble Friend has not made any statement in the language set out in the question.

FORESTRY SERVICE (PROBATIONERS).

71 and 72. Mr. RAWLINSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India (1) whether, in future, probationers for the Indian Forest Service will still continue to be able to be trained at any university having a forestry department, or whether they will be compelled to be trained at Oxford; and what sum it is proposed should be spent on the training of such probationers during the present financial year from the Estimates and from the funds of the Forestry Committee;

(2) whether any and what new arrangements have been made, or are proposed, for the selection of probationers for the Indian Forest Service; whether graduates of any university will still continue to be eligible for selection without further conditions being imposed; and whether any new Regulations will be allowed to be discussed in the House before they come into force?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. R. Richards): I will answer these questions together. The Government of India have proposed that from the autumn of 1925 onwards probationers for the Indian Forest Service shall be trained at Dehra Dun. This proposal is still under consideration. No change is proposed in the qualifications for appointment, and graduates of any university in the United Kingdom or India will continue to be eligible. The Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India has recommended that no further recruitment should be made for the Indian Forest Service in Bombay and Burma, in which provinces forest administration is a transferred subject, and that the Governments of those two provinces should in future recruit their own forest officers. I cannot say what arrangements will be made, if this recommendation is accepted, for training probationers for the two provinces in question. The cost of training probationers is borne by Indian revenues, and no change is contemplated in this respect.

Mr. RAWLINSON: Do I understand from the answer that no change is to be made at present in the selection of probationers, and that they will not be compelled in any way to reside at one particular university?

Mr. RICHARDS: No, Sir

FORESTRY (GRANTS TO UNIVERSITIES).

67 and 68. **Mr. ROBERT MORRISON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies (1) in view of the fact that an appreciable number of men for the Colonial forest service are trained at Cambridge and that they are not chosen until their course of education is complete, whether it is intended that the University of Cambridge shall receive a grant of £300 per annum from the Colonial Office on exactly the same footing as Oxford?

(2) asked the right hon. Member for Tiverton, as representing the Forestry Commissioners, in view of the fact that the Forestry Commission has made a grant of £5,000 per year for five years to the Oxford School of Forestry, whether a guarantee can be given that students chosen as probationers for Indian and Colonial forest services shall still continue to have the option of choosing their own centre of education in forestry, and that there shall be no preference shown to Oxford to the detriment of the other universities at which men have previously been trained in forestry for the Indian and Colonial services?

Mr. ACLAND (Forestry Commissioner): I have been asked to take over the first of these questions. My reply will incorporate the answer to the second question on the same subject addressed to me by the hon. Member. The Colonial Office at present make no grants to British Universities in respect of forestry education. The Forestry Commissioners have no responsibility for the selection and training of Indian and Colonial Forest probationers, but make grants of £500 per annum both to Oxford and Cambridge Universities in respect of the degree and diploma courses for forestry. In addition the Commissioners and the Secretary of State for the Colonies are collaborating with the University of Oxford to set up an Imperial Forestry Institute at Oxford as recommended by the British Empire Forestry Conference and endorsed by the Imperial Economic Conference. The functions of the institute will be distinct from those of the existing schools of forestry, which remain unaltered, and will be to provide post-graduate training for selected probationers, special courses for senior officers in the various Forest Services, and, where required, the train-

ing of specialists in the methods of forestry research. It is proposed that the Forestry Commissioners and the Colonial Governments concerned shall contribute £2,000 and £3,000 respectively towards the annual cost of the institute.

Mr. MILLS: In choosing the students under this particular scheme, will any consideration be shown to children from the elementary schools as distinct from Oxford and Cambridge?

Mr. RAWLINSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer that part of the question which asks

"whether a guarantee can be given that students chosen as probationers for Indian and Colonial forest services shall still continue to have the option of choosing their own centre of education in forestry, and that there shall be no preference shown to Oxford to the detriment of the other universities at which men have previously been trained in forestry for the Indian and Colonial services?"

Mr. MACPHERSON: Is the right hon. Gentleman going to give a grant to the other Universities, such as Edinburgh, which has specialised for many years in forestry?

Mr. HANNON: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider Dublin University in this connection?

Lieut.-Colonel WATTS-MORGAN: And the Welsh Universities as well?

Sir H. BRITAIN: Is it possible to do better than Oxford?

Mr. ACLAND: I am able to carry in my mind only the first three supplementary questions. With regard to candidates coming from elementary schools, we would, of course, wish to, and, I think, should, encourage it in every possible way. No conceivable differentiation could possibly be made against them, at any rate. With regard to preference in connection with Indian and Colonial probationers, there will be no alteration whatever in allowing them the option of a centre for their forestry education. This new Imperial Institute is for a different purpose. With regard to Edinburgh, it has already had in a very large capital grant which Oxford and Cambridge have not had; that is to say, it has had the equivalent in capital of what Oxford and Cambridge are getting in annual grants.

Sir GEORGE BERRY: Who made the grant?

Mr. ACLAND: The grant was made by the Government just before the Forestry Commission was set up, and it is paid out of the forestry funds at the disposal of the Government.

Viscount CURZON: Will the right hon. Gentleman see that no preference is extended to Ruskin College?

Mr. RAWLINSON: In reference to Question No. 67, will the right hon. Gentleman answer that part which asks "whether it is intended that the University of Cambridge shall receive a grant of £300 per annum from the Colonial Office on exactly the same footing as Oxford?"

Mr. ACLAND: No grant was made from the Colonial Office to Oxford, and, therefore, the question of Cambridge getting a grant from the Colonial Office did not arise.

Monday, 2nd June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

UNEMPLOYMENT

1. **Mr. W. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is the practice of the Government in India to issue in statistical form information with regard to unemployment, health and education within the Indian Empire?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): It is not the practice to publish statistics of unemployment as this normally does not exist in India, but on the occurrence of a famine statistics showing the number on relief works or in receipt of relief are published in India. Health and education statistics are contained in the Statistical Abstract for British India (Cmd. 2033); education statistics are also contained in the Quinquennial Review of Progress of Education in India; a copy of the eighth issue of this (1917-22) has been placed in the Library.

Mr. BAKER: Will the hon. Gentleman supply the House with returns showing the present unemployment in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am afraid that that is an almost impossible task.

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: Is it not the case that the demand for labour exceeds the supply?

BOMBAY, TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

2. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the Bombay Government appointed a Technical and Industrial Education Committee in March, 1921, that a Report was presented by the Committee after a year's labours, and that, although the scheme proposed had a most favourable Press, no action has been taken upon it, he will, in view of the importance of developing technical, industrial and commercial education, consider the possibility of adopting the proposals of the Committee?

Mr. RICHARDS: Education being a subject which has been transferred to the control of local governments in India, it is for the Government of Bombay, by whom the Committee in question was appointed, to decide what action, if any, should be taken upon its proposals.

ROYAL INDIAN MARINE.

3. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the scheme for the reorganisation of the Royal Indian Marine on a combatant basis has been accepted in principle by the Government of India; and, if so, whether steps are being taken to bring the discussion on the matter to an end and put the scheme into operation?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am afraid I am not in a position to add anything to the answer I gave on the 21st May.

Sir C. YATE: Can the hon. Gentleman give any indication of when this matter will be settled?

Mr. RICHARDS: What I said was that the matter is still under consideration.

Sir C. YATE: How long will that continue?

PROPORTIONATE PENSIONS (BRITISH OFFICIALS).

4. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, to avoid treating British members of the All-India

[Sir C. Yate.]

Services on a different footing from British members of the provincial services in India in the matter of retirement on proportionate pensions under the reform scheme of 1919, the Secretary of State will now give effect to the original proposals of the Government of India and the recommendation of the Joint Committee and withdraw the limit prescribed in 1921?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer the hon. and gallant Member to the reply which I gave on the 21st May to a question on the same subject by the right hon. Member for Twickenham. My Noble Friend is in correspondence with the Government of India on the whole question of the position of these officers.

Sir C. YATE: When can I put down a question and know the result?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am afraid that I cannot answer that question.

Sir C. YATE: After Whitsuntide?

11. **Mr. WARDLAW MILNE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House the latest figures of resignations under the system of proportionate pension in the senior Civil Services in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT the figures asked for in the question.

Mr. MILNE: Can the hon. Gentleman say generally whether the figures do not show a remarkable increase?

Mr. RICHARDS: I could not answer that off-hand.

Following are the figures:

The number of retirements from the various services sanctioned up to date under the premature retirement rules is as follows:

Indian Civil Service	87
Indian Police Service	98
Indian Educational Service	36
Indian Service of Engineers	59
Indian Forest Service	24
Indian Agricultural Service	12
Veterinary Service	5

Total 321

A large proportion of these officers is still on leave pending retirement

MILITARY OPERATIONS (PAYMENTS).

5. **Mr. AYLES** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any interest has been paid to India on the sum of about £7,000,000 advanced by the Government of India from time to time for military operations in Iraq during the years 1918 to 1921; and whether the consent of Parliament was obtained for this utilisation of Indian money for military operations outside India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer is in the negative. The sums to which I gather my hon. Friend refers do not, my Noble Friend is advised, come within the provisions of Section 22 of the Government of India Act. They represented, in the main, account balances in respect of money order transactions, for the greater part relating to the year 1920-1921. Repayment was made in the course of 1921-1922. It would have been contrary to practice prevailing between the India Office and other Departments of State to claim interest on the moneys, and the facts of the case were not held to justify departure from the normal practice, which is, of course, reciprocal.

8. **Mr. BROAD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that a sum of £200,000 was paid out of Indian revenues to the War Office in 1919 as a contribution towards military operations beyond the frontiers of India, he will state whether the sanction of this Parliament was obtained for this payment?

Mr. RICHARDS: This payment was in respect of an exchange concession in connection with certain sterling war gratuities, which were converted into rupees at the rate of 1s. 4d. to the rupee, instead of 1s. 8d., the rate current at the time of issue, August, 1918. The question of the incidence of cost of this concession was submitted to the arbitration of an hon. Member of this House, who decided that the whole cost should be borne by India. The question whether the payment will require the sanction of Parliament is under consideration along with other matters under discussion between the Government of India and the Imperial Government.

9. **Mr. HOFFMAN** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that £13,000,000 were paid out of

the Indian revenues to the War Office in 1919 as a contribution towards military operations beyond the frontiers of India, and that it is laid down in Section 22 of the Government of India Act that the consent of both the Houses of Parliament must be taken for the employment of the Indian Army beyond the Indian frontiers, he will say whether such consent was asked and obtained?

Mr. RICHARDS: His Majesty's Government were informed that the payment in question was provisional and subject to the ultimate approval of Parliament. Various questions affecting the substance and form of the Resolution which would be required have been under discussion between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government and have delayed its submission. In the meantime the payment, as I have said, is provisional and subject to such adjustment as may be found necessary.

ARMY HOSPITALS.

6 and 7. **Mr. BROAD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India (1) whether he can state how far effect has been given to the recommendations of Lord Inchcape's Committee on Retrenchment to reduce the number of Army hospitals and the number of beds in those which are retained; and whether any and, if so, what reduction has been made in the hospital staffs as recommended by that Committee?

(2) whether, seeing that the Inchcape Retrenchment Committee reported that British hospitals in India are not used to a quarter of their capacity and Indian hospitals only to a third of their capacity, and that they made recommendations for the reduction of the number of hospitals, beds and staffs, he will state whether any action was taken on these recommendations; and what is the financial saving in consequence?

Mr. RICHARDS: As the reply is somewhat long, and includes a statistical table, I will, with the hon. Member's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

Action taken on proposals of the Indian Retrenchment Committee regarding Medical Services and Hospitals.

The number of beds in the British and Indian station hospitals has been reduced by the amounts shown below:

	British Station Hospital.	Indian Station Hospital.
Northern Command ...	1,016	1,180
Southern Command ...	466	582
Eastern Command ...	331	184
Western Command ...	83	95
Burma District ...	61	—

A reduction of 15 officers of the Indian Medical Service has been carried out, and the services of 60 Assistant Surgeons are being dispensed with. A saving of Rs. 5 lakhs was anticipated from these reductions, but the actual net saving is not yet known.

MURDER OF SUB-INSPECTOR ROY.

10. **Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any information with regard to the murder of Sub-Inspector Roy at Chittagong; and whether this was a political murder, and was in any way connected with the conspiracy case recently tried in Cawnpore?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have very little information. The deceased had arrested an abseconder accused in a case described briefly in a telegram as "the Chittagong political case, in which the persons tried were recently acquitted." It is understood that the reference is to a dacoity committed in December last; some of the persons believed to be concerned in that were in March stated to be connected with the Manikola bomb factory. I should think it most unlikely that the case has any relation whatever to the Cawnpore case. One arrest is reported to have been made.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Was not Sub-Inspector Roy responsible for running down several of these revolutionary conspiracies?

Mr. RICHARDS: He was responsible for arresting one of these individuals.

UNITED PROVINCES, CIVIL SURGEONS.

12. **Mr. HOPE SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many civil surgeons are employed in the United Provinces, and of these how many are commissioned European officers?

Mr. RICHARDS: There are 50 civil surgeons in the United Provinces. On the 1st January last these included 15 European officers of the Indian Medical Service and 10 officers of the Indian Medical Department.

FORESTS (ADMINISTRATION).

13. **Mr. SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India in what provinces the Forest administration is a reserved subject and, in those provinces, what percentage of the gazetted staff is European; and whether any difficulty has been experienced in obtaining Indian candidates for the Forest service in those provinces?

Mr. RICHARDS: The administration of Forests is a reserved subject in every province but Burma and Bombay. Indian probationers for the Imperial Forest Service are ordinarily selected in India. The Government of India have not informed my Noble Friend of any recent difficulty in obtaining the required number of qualified candidates. I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT the figures asked for in the second part of the question.

Following are the figures:

The following are the percentages of European officers of the Imperial Forest Service in the provinces other than Burma and Bombay taken from the most recent lists received from India:

Assam	94.12
Bengal	94.44
Bihar and Orissa	84.62
Central Provinces	88.98
Madras	85.42
Punjab	78.57
United Provinces	93.93

It would be necessary to ask the Government of India for information as to the percentages of European in the gazetted staff other than the Imperial Forest Service.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY).

14. **Mr. SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the names of the non-official members of the Committee appointed by the Government of India to inquire into the working of the reforms; and whether

the terms of reference include inquiry and report on amendments necessary in the Government of India Act, 1919?

Mr. RICHARDS: I cannot yet give the names of the members of the Committee but expect to be able to do so shortly. The terms of reference to the Committee are: (i) to inquire into difficulties arising from, or defects inherent in, the working of the Government of India Act and the Rules thereunder, and (ii) to investigate the feasibility and desirability of securing remedies for such difficulties or defects consistent with the structure, policy and purpose of the Act—

(a) by action taken under the Act and Rules, or

(b) by such amendments of the Act as appear necessary to rectify any administrative imperfections.

Mr. MILNE: Is it the duty of the Committee to suggest Amendments in the Act, and if so is not that a contradiction of what the hon. Gentleman stated in the House?

Mr. RICHARDS: No. The Committee is to consider imperfections in the working of the Act.

Earl WINTERTON: In what way are the terms of reference of this Committee different from those of the statutory Royal Commission to be set up under the Act?

Mr. RICHARDS: The terms of reference were outlined by Sir Malcolm Hailey in the two speeches which he made earlier in the year.

Earl WINTERTON: Did he, in fact, use language which could now be taken as being the same as the actual terms of reference?

Mr. RICHARDS: I think that all these statements will be found in these two speeches.

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER: Would it not be better to set up a Royal Commission to deal with this matter straight away?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is another opinion.

Sir C. YATE: This is quite a new matter.

Mr. RICHARDS: It is not new. This is what was promised in February.

ARMY PENSIONS (BREVET RANK).

48. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering that there is no retiring age for brevets in the Indian Army, and that a brevet-lieutenant-colonel of the Indian Army retires on a major's pension and a brevet-colonel on a lieutenant-colonel's pension, he will authorise the Government of India to fix the retiring age of a brevet-colonel at 55, the same as a lieutenant-colonel, or, failing this grant to brevet-colonels, the full pensions of a substantive colonel?

Mr. RICHARDS: The ages for the compulsory retirement of officers of the Indian Army are those laid down in the Royal Warrant for the pay, etc., of the Army. The pension of an officer of the Indian Army is calculated as in the British service with reference to his substantive rank, and my Noble Friend is not prepared to permit brevet rank to count as though it were substantive rank.

ARMY CONTROL.

49. **Mr. MILLS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Esher Committee on the Indian Army recommended that the Army in India should be entirely under the control, real as well as nominal, of the Government of India, and should be free from any domination or interference by the War Office on matters of military policy, organisation, or administration, and that such co-ordination as may be desirable between the military policies or organisations of different parts of the Empire should be secured by discussion and agreement at conferences at which India is adequately represented; and whether this recommendation has been accepted and acted on by His Majesty's Government?

Mr. RICHARDS: His Majesty's Government, realising the importance of maintaining the responsibility and control of the Government of India, have decided that the Government of India must be responsible for all questions of military policy, organisation and administration of the Army in India, subject to the control of the Secretary of State for India, as provided for in the Government of India Act. On all discussions on questions of military policy and organisation India is adequately represented.

Earl WINTERTON: Does the hon. Gentleman suggest by his answer that this policy was not carried out by previous Governments; and has not the policy which he has stated in his answer invariably been the policy of successive Governments in this country?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no suggestion of the kind to which the Noble Lord refers.

Earl WINTERTON: Did I not understand the hon. Gentleman to suggest that there is a new departure in policy?

TARIFF BILL.

68. **Sir WALTER de FRECE** asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Overseas Trade Department whether, in view of the Indian Tariff Bill and the new proposals which have been made within the last few days, he is taking steps to lay before British commercial interests affected the exact significance of these proposals; and whether he has received any indications up to the present to the effect that any of these proposals will produce a prejudicial effect upon British export trade?

Mr. LUNN (Secretary, Overseas Trade Department): A review of the Reports of the Indian Tariff Board embodying their recommendations for revised duties on iron and steel was published in the "Board of Trade Journal" for the 8th May. A copy of the Bill to which the hon. Member refers has not yet been received, but details of the duties proposed by the Measure will be published in the Journal as soon as the information is available. I have received no representations on the subject since the Tariff Board's recommendations were made public.

Sir F. WISE: Was this tariff introduced to bolster up a particular firm in India, and would the consumer benefit?

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

IMPORT DUTIES (IRON AND STEEL).

Mr. D. G. SOMERVILLE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the new Indian Tariff Bill, he has been asked to make, and is

making, any representations on behalf of British commercial interests affected; and, if so, what these interests are?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has not been asked by any British commercial interests to make representations on their behalf in connection with the Bill increasing the Indian import duties on iron and steel which is now before the Indian Legislature; but when the Indian Tariff Board were considering the question representations were received by the India Office from the London Chamber of Commerce, the Welsh Plate and Sheet Manufacturers' Association, and a London firm interested in gold-mining in India. I understand that the London Chamber of Commerce deputed a representative to give evidence before the Tariff Board in India.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

Mr. AYLES asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that £13,000,000 were paid out of Indian revenues to the War Office in 1919 as a contribution towards military operations beyond the frontiers of India, he will state whether the sanction of Parliament was given for such expenditure?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer the hon. Member to the oral reply given to-day to the hon. Member for Essex, South-East (Mr. Hoffman), on the same subject.

ARMY DISTRICTS AND COMMANDS.

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the Inchcape Committee recommended that there should be an investigation with regard to the possibility of reducing the number of Army districts in India, he will say whether such investigation has been made, and with what result?

Mr. RICHARDS: No proposals have been received from the Government of India with a view to reducing the number of Army districts in India.

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the Inchcape Committee recommended that there should be an investigation into the necessity of retaining four Army commands, he will say whether such investigation has been commenced, and when a Report may be expected?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India, after full consideration, do not pro-

pose to recommend reduction in the number of Army commands.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of unemployed in India; and what measures, if any, have been taken to cope with this industrial problem?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no unemployment in industrial centres in India nor, in normal seasons, in agriculture, but each Province has in its Famine Code, an elaborate machinery for dealing in times of scarcity or famine with unemployment, not only among agricultural workers, but with unemployment among village artisans whose livelihood depends upon the custom of agriculturists. Those fit to work are provided with actual employment; to the unfit suitable relief is given, while small cultivators are enabled to resume cultivation, when the famine season closes, by the grant of loans on specially easy terms. Provincial Famine Codes have been progressively improved in the light of past experience, and are worked by officers familiar with their provisions. They provide an effective organisation for dealing promptly and economically with agricultural unemployment, however widespread.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

CANADA AND INDIA (BRITISH AND UNITED STATES IMPORTS).

Commander BELLAIRS asked the President of the Board of Trade the respective percentage of the imports of Canada and India from Great Britain and the United States for 1906 and for the latest year available?

Mr. LUNN: In the 12 months ended 30th June, 1906, the percentage of imports into Canada for domestic consumption (including silver bullion) from the United Kingdom was 24·4 per cent. of the total imports, and those from the United States were 59·6 per cent. For the 12 months ended 31st March, 1924, these percentages were 17·2 and 67·3 respectively. The imports of private merchandise and Government stores into India from the United Kingdom during the 12 months ended 31st March, 1907, were 68·8 per cent. of the total imports, and those from the

United States were 2·5 per cent. For the 12 months ended 31st March, 1923, these percentages were 61·7 and 5·4 respectively. Excluding Government stores, the imports from the United Kingdom during the 12 months ended 31st March, 1927, were 66·8 per cent. of the total imports of private merchandise into India, and those from the United States 2·4 per cent. For the calendar year 1923 these percentages were 57·7 and 5·3 per cent. respectively.

Tuesday, 3rd June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE (COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION).

58. **Sir GEOFFREY BUTLER** asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the minute of Sir Cyril Jackson and Professor Coupland to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India (Cmd. 2128), he will undertake that there shall be no alteration in the present Regulations for the open competitive examination for the Civil Service (Home and Indian) before the various universities, British and Overseas, have been given an opportunity to express their views?

Mr. GRAHAM: The present scheme of examination for the Indian Civil Service and the administrative class of the Home Civil Service, which is also used for concurrent competitions for the Diplomatic and Consular Services and certain Colonial Services, was framed on lines recommended in the Report of a Committee of very high authority (Command Paper 8657 of 1917), and after detailed consultation with the various university authorities. The Civil Service Commission would not propose any alteration of the scheme without very full and careful consideration.

Thursday, 5th June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

TARIFF PROPOSALS.

78. **Mr. HARLAND** asked the Minister of Labour if he is aware that, as the outcome of the tariff proposals which the Indian Imperial Assembly is now engaged in debating, the Indian Tariff Board estimates that, not including heavy steel rails and railway wagons, to be excluded from India under bounty proposals, India's imports of mild steel will undergo between now and March, 1927, a reduction of 218,000 tons, valued at some 2½ millions sterling; and, if so, whether he is modifying his estimates of unemployment in the United Kingdom to accord with the probable effects of India's action on the market from which she derives two-thirds of her steel supplies?

Mr. SHAW: I have seen the estimate of the Indian Tariff Board, which appears to be based on the assumption that under the proposed tariff the total consumption in India of the materials referred to will be approximately the same in 1926-7 as it is to-day, and that the Indian production will be largely increased owing to the enhanced prices arising from the tariff. I doubt whether this is a safe basis on which to make estimates of unemployment in Great Britain.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ARMY OFFICERS (MARRIAGE ALLOWANCE).

Mr. RAWLINSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is possible to restore the allowance to married officers in India, having regard to the very large extra expense that married officers are put to for their wives and families in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: Special attention is being paid to the position of married officers in connection with the revision of Indian military rates of pay, which is now under consideration.

SUPERIOR CIVIL SERVICES.

Mr. A. T. DAVIES asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether His

Majesty's Government has adopted, or intends to adopt, the recommendations contained in the recent Report of the Royal Commission on the Indian Civil Service?

Mr. RICHARDS: The recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services are being considered by the Government of India in consultation with Local Governments. The Government of India, with the approval of my Noble Friend, have announced in the Indian Legislature their opinion that whatever measures of relief recommended by the Commission may be finally sanctioned, should have effect, as recommended by the Commission, from 1st April, 1924. For the rest, I am unable to say what action will be taken by His Majesty's Government on the recommendations, as they are not yet in possession of the views of the Government of India upon them.

FINANCE.

Sir F. WISE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can give the note circulation and reserves of gold, silver, securities, and bills of exchange against the notes for the 22nd of May, 1924, and the same date for 1923 in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The statistics required are given in the Table below:

	22nd May, 1924.	22nd May, 1923.
	Lakhs of rupees.	Lakhs of rupees.
Reserves against note issue:		
Gold in India ...	2,232	2,432
Silver in India ...	7,629	8,325
Government of India securities ...	5,753	5,753
British Government securities ...	1,400	585
Bills of exchange ...	800	—
Gross note circulation ...	17,814	17,095

Sir F. WISE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the variations of the Indian bank rate during the last 12 months?

Mr. RICHARDS: The changes in the Indian bank rate during the last 12 months have been as follow:

	1923.	Per cent.
31st May	6
7th June	5
28th „	4
15th November	5
29th „	6
20th December	7
	1924.	
3rd January	8
14th February	9
10th April	8
29th May	7

Friday, 6th June, 1924.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (WHITSUNTIDE).

Resolved,

“That this House, at its rising this day, do adjourn until Monday, 16th June.”—
[*Mr. Clynes.*]

INDIA.

Earl WINTERTON: I desire to ask the Under-Secretary of State for India one or two questions about a state of affairs which, in some respects, is of equal, if not of greater importance to that which we have just been discussing. The hon. and gallant Member for Leith (Captain W. Benn) has referred to the attitude of those who sit on this side of the House towards Imperial questions. I am about to deal with matters vitally affecting India, but I take the liberty to say to him that in my deliberate opinion, had the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) in his attitude towards, on the one hand Greece, and on the other hand Turkey, been carried to its logical conclusion by the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had remained in office it would have gone a long way towards making the problem of the Government of India absolutely impossible. I say now from my official experience at the India Office that there is no name of any statesman in this country more universally mistrusted

throughout India than that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon Boroughs, or whose policy is believed to be more disastrous to the relations between India and this country.

I desire to raise two matters of which I have given notice. I wish also to refer to another matter which has occurred since I gave notice. The first is the letter which was recently written by the Secretary of State to the Indian Swarajist, Mr. S. Satyamurti; secondly, the terms of reference of the Committee appointed by the Government to inquire into the machinery and working of the Act of 1919. There is a third point. Has the attention of the Secretary of State been directed to the very serious action recently taken, in fact within the last week, by one of the branches of the so-called National Congress of India in passing a resolution which is in effect a direct condonation of murder? I do not propose in the brief remarks which I am about to make to deal with the Lee Commission Report, which is too big a subject to discuss at the fag end of an adjournment debate. If it is to be discussed here at all, the opportunity should be given for it to be discussed fully.

The first matter to which I have to refer is, as I have said, the letter written by the Secretary of State to a Swarajist member of the Madras Council. I propose only to say a word, for the question was, I think, as satisfactorily disposed of as could be by the Debate which took place in another place, and which, of course, it is not in order for me to refer to this afternoon. I should like, however, to ask the hon. Gentleman, the Under Secretary, to give the House an assurance that in future the ordinary procedure will be rigidly observed in communicating the views of the Secretary of State to the people of India, that is through the Viceroy and the Government of India. The Under-Secretary of State has shown in his answers to questions a most meticulous care to avoid giving any information which would embarrass the Government of India, himself, or any other person, and it is to be hoped that the Secretary of State will in future follow the example of his Under-Secretary, and refrain from polite letter-writing to Swarajist gentlemen in India. I think that is all I need say on what I think the House generally

will agree is a somewhat unhappy incident.

I come to the second matter, that is, what will be the exact scope of the work which is to be done by the second of the two Committees of inquiry which has been appointed by the Government of India? I have carefully read the two statements which have been made on the subject by Sir Malcolm Hailey in the Indian Assembly and I am bound to say though Sir Malcolm's statements are generally characterised by clearness there is a certain ambiguity that I am anxious to see cleared up by the Under-Secretary. Sir Malcolm, speaking on 8th February of this year, in the legislative assembly at Delhi, said that the Government:

"Would undertake an official examination of the defects in the working of the present machinery, which, unfortunately, had not been given a proper chance. The proposed inquiry would aim at removing the difficulties revealed in the working of the Act, but it would not be an inquiry intended to alter the framework of the policy of the Act."

Speaking on 18th February Sir Malcolm said—

"Speaking with the full authority of the British Government—"

which was a rather curious phrase to use in the Indian Assembly, and of rather special significance—

"that the Government held to its general position as stated in his speech of last Friday week. Before His Majesty's Government would be able to consider the Amendment of the Constitution, as distinct from Amendments of the Act to rectify imperfections of administration, there must be a firm investigation of the defects and difficulties which have arisen in the working of the transitional constitution. The British people was not lightly inclined to consider changes in the British Constitution laid down by Parliament in 1919 after the fullest consideration."

I do not know whether those words were intended to be a sort of sop to the Swarajists, but they seem to contemplate that these two Committees, the second of which has recently been appointed, are both merely preliminary, and that there is some possibility of further steps being taken by the Government of India or by His Majesty's Government to consider the amendment of the Constitution as distinct from the amendment of the Act. The statement I have just quoted contains the words:

"Before His Majesty's Government would be able to consider the amendment of the Constitution."

[Earl Winterton.]

I would like to point out that by the appointment of this Committee the danger is of a predetermination by the Committee of what it will be the duty of the Statutory Commission to decide in 1929. After all, the period between now and 1929 is only five years, a very short period in the history of the working of a constitution. I think I am entitled to ask the Under-Secretary for an unequivocal assurance that what we on this side have hitherto understood to be the pledged undertaking of the Government will be adhered to, and that is that the first stage of the reforms ending in 1930 will be carried out as this House determined they should be in the 1919 Act without either acceleration or retardation. It is important that we should be assured that this very short testing period will be adhered to.

I will make two qualifications to the assurance which I have just sought. First of all, if it can be shown that there are defects in the working machinery of the Act which can be remedied without affecting in any degree the principle of the Act, or altering the rate of progress laid down in it, then I think it can legitimately be done. If that is all the Government of India and the Government of this country have in mind in the formation of this Committee, then I think no one on this side will have any objection. I think, however, that we do need an assurance on that point, more especially in view of the pressure which is being put on the Government from various quarters to alter the whole basis of the working of the Act.

The other qualification I would make is that if the Swarajists by their action make the Act unworkable then its principles may have to be altered before 1930, although such an alteration, if we on this side of the House can prevent it, will certainly not be in the direction of giving the Assembly and the Councils greater power or abating one jot the protection which this House, through the Secretary of State and the Government of India gives to the helpless minorities and the depressed classes of India against some of those who would, if there was a great devolution of power, be in a position to exercise over them a control which in the past we have always done our best to prevent. That is all I wish to say on that point except to make this further observation that by far the best way for the Government to deal with the un-

doubtedly difficult situation with which they are faced in India—I do not think it is more difficult than it was three or four years ago, and apart from purely political agitation I think the state of India has been better both under the present Government and the late Government than it was three or four years ago—would be to dispose of all the rumours, threats and rumblings one hears, and say more firmly than has yet been said by the Under-Secretary or the Secretary of State for India that this Government, like their predecessors, do not intend to be deflected from the course laid down by the 1919 Act by pressure either from the right or from the left, and that they intend to carry out the Act of 1919 to the best of their ability. While I do not see any great objection to these committees of inquiry with the qualifications I have indicated, I do fear the effect of them may be to instil into the minds of those who have to work the Act in India, both European officials and others who are now well disposed towards the Act, a feeling of doubt and uncertainty, and it may cause them to ask are the Government going to adhere to the policy laid down by previous Governments or not? I do not wish to press the Under-Secretary further on that point, and if he will give us an assurance that what is taking place is merely an inquiry that will be satisfactory.

I wish now to say that I regard as a very serious symptom indeed of corruption of one portion of the body politic in India, and I think it is only a limited portion, the action of the Bengal Branch of the National Congress in passing a resolution which condoned the murder of a perfectly innocent Englishman, Mr. Day, who had no connection whatever with politics. I think that is one of the most infamous actions ever taken by any body of people who had the smallest pretence to responsibility in any part of the Empire. While I have heard in the past of attempts being made in debate not to condone but to find reasons for certain events of violence in other parts of the Empire, as was the case in Ireland, everyone knows that it would be inconceivable that any Member of this House could ever get up and condone the murder of a perfectly innocent man by a fanatic in India, on the ground that the murderer in some obscure way was helping the cause of the Swarajists in India. The responsibility rests with the Govern-

ment of Bengal and the Government of India, and in a lesser degree with His Majesty's Government, and I do not know what action they are going to take, but I hardly think that an incident of that kind can be ignored.

The serious feature is that this Congress is mainly composed of the Dasite Party, and to judge by the reports, Mr. Das has succeeded in making himself one of the most powerful personalities in India, and has taken up largely in India the position occupied by Mr. Ghandi. Every one of those who voted for this Resolution in the Bengal National Congress were Swarajists and the vast majority of them were the pledged followers of Mr. Das. I do not know whether Mr. Das was at the Conference, but he was privy to what occurred. He is not only one of the most prominent politicians in India, but he is also Mayor of Calcutta, and he was approached by the present Governor of Bengal three or four months ago—I do not quarrel with the Governor's action—and asked whether he would become a Minister. It is the followers of Mr. Das who have passed this infamous resolution, a resolution which, serious enough in this country in the possible effect it might have, is trebly, quadruply and one hundred times more serious in India, where it might have the result of instigation to the murder of Europeans and loyal Indians.

It looks as if we have approached the parting of the ways in this matter, and as if it was necessary for the local government of Bengal, or through the direct action of the Government of India to take steps that will prevent a continuance of this sort of thing. I am not advocating anything in the nature of Diehard methods. I have always resisted the pressure from Members of my own party to take strong action where it was not justified. I am in every sense of the word a Moderate in these matters, but I do not believe that in any section of the House there would be any objection to the Government taking legal action against people who advocate murder in a highly inflammable province such as the Province of Bengal. My own view is that the difficulty in India to-day is far more largely a difficulty confined to a certain number of politicians, and the difficulty of maintaining law and order is again a matter of dealing with a comparatively small section of a

very large population. In the years from 1919 to 1922 the difficulty was much greater. You had a large mass of the population greatly inflamed against Government, and I fear greatly inflamed against Europeans *qua* Europeans. That was the case in those years. I doubt if that is true of the state of affairs to-day. I am glad—I have heard it from many quarters—that the attitude of Indians generally towards Government, towards Europeans, is better than it was in the critical years of 1920 and 1921.

But there are not wanting people in India to-day who would do everything they could, and perhaps go so far as to risk their own lives in the doing of it, to bring India back to the state of turmoil and danger in which she was in those years; and there are not wanting people in Bengal who would like to see that province return to the unhappy state of affairs that existed, I think in 1908 or 1909, when what I call the bomb and revolver methods of political persuasion were indulged in by a section of the population. Speaking with responsibility, as anyone must who has been Under-Secretary of State for India or who has been connected in any way with the administration of India, I say that if it can be shown that Mr. Das or any other of the prominent Swarajist politicians of Bengal or India are privy to this movement of violence of which this Congress Resolution appears to be a symptom, and which seems to link up the Congress indissolubly with the people whose methods are those of the bomb and the revolver—if it can be shown that they are privy to or have instigated such a movement, I trust that this Government will not have any hesitation, in spite of the injudicious attitude of some of their supporters when they were private Members, in putting the whole machinery of the law into operation. If, following this abominable action of this Bengal Congress, there is an outbreak of political murder in India, both the Government of India and this Government will have very serious responsibility on their shoulders if they have not meanwhile taken steps to deal with those who instigated it.

Lieut.-Colonel T. WILLIAMS: I would like in the first place to express my gratitude to the Noble Lord for bringing on this Debate about India. The whole problem is so important, that we cannot discuss the question with sufficient fre-

[Earl Winterton.]

quency in this House. It has been a sorrow to me as an old Government of India servant, and as one very interested in Indian affairs, that we have had only very scrappy debates on this subject during the whole of this Parliament. Therefore, we owe a very great debt of gratitude to any Member who goes out of his way to start a discussion on this question. To-day I have found myself more in agreement with the Noble Lord who has just spoken than I found myself on a former occasion when he spoke on Indian questions. I agree with all that he says about the resolution passed by the Bengal branch of the National Congress. I think it is very important that we should definitely realise that certain conditions existed in the past in Bengal, and that it is absolutely essential, if they recur, that more or less similar action should be taken to put down these murder gangs in the interests of the whole of the people in that province. The Noble Lord referred to another thing which I believe is a fact. My information goes to show that the conditions in India generally are very much better than they were in 1919, 1920 and 1921. I believe that on the whole things are progressing. I think the attitude of the Noble Lord to-day was much more reasonable than in a former debate. He has told us that he is not in any way a Die-hard, but is essentially moderate. His moderateness always seems to me to be of a very Die-hard variety. I cannot agree with the attitude of mind which he brings to this problem.

As to the broad facts of the problem there will be no dispute. I agree with everything that was put forward by an hon. Member opposite on a previous occasion, about the very great complexity of the problem, due to the enormous area of India, the enormous number of the races in India, and the very great divisions resulting from religion, caste and all that kind of thing. There is no dispute about that. There is another very important fact we must keep in mind and it is the trend of political progress in India during the last 20 or 30 years. You must keep that in mind while considering the material facts which go to complicate the situation. The issue to-day is merely between those who seem more or less to want to stand fast or to go too slowly, and those who are prepared

to go very much faster than we are doing at the present moment. I would like to suggest to the Noble Lord that this is where it seems to me, after quite a large experience in India and the East, that he gets wrong. It is in not understanding that this is really a psychological problem. It is all very well to deal with it from administrative areas like Downing-Street or the India Office, but we want to get down to understand what the Indian people are feeling on this question.

I am sorry the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Hope Simpson) is not here to-day. On a previous occasion he made a speech for which he was taken seriously to task by the noble lord, but I agreed with everything said by the hon. Member for Taunton on that occasion. You have to remember that things have been moving very fast not only in India but all over Asia during the last 20 years, and, therefore, I suggest that at the present moment we are faced with a problem which is largely psychological. The difficulties are enormous. You have a position of affairs at the present moment in which people are disgruntled. They won't listen to your talk. When you are thinking of the Indian problem you must not concentrate too much on India alone: it is necessary to look at the whole of Asia. One can look back at periods in history and point to certain events which proved to be turning points in particular centuries. I should like to ask the House—and I think the hon. and gallant Member for Melton (Sir C. Yate) will probably agree with me—to remember that there is one great milestone which can be marked down in this century, and that is the Russo-Japanese War. Up to that time practically the whole of Asia has been dominated by the West, but the Russo-Japanese War demonstrated that an Eastern Power was capable, by organisation, of bringing down a first-class Western Power. That turned the whole problem of the East, and after that you saw an entirely different look come into men's eyes. They did not know exactly what they wanted, but they walked better, they looked better, and they stood more upright because they felt there was a chance after all of proving that they were men just as much as the people in the West. Therefore I would ask hon. Members to take into their consideration the fact that from the Russo-Japanese War arose a ferment

which has been spreading rapidly all over Asia. You can trace it in most recent movements. In China, Persia and Turkey it has been progressing rapidly. Most of the people cannot describe what they want, but they know it is something which they call "running their own affairs." This ferment is acting very strongly, and it is getting much more difficult to deal with. It has really brought us up against this trouble in India. It was moving so rapidly that we in this country did not realise how quickly it was progressing, and, as a result of that, there were actions taken by this country and by the Government of India due to a want of understanding, to a lack of imagination, to a want of ability to see what was happening in people's minds.

If the House will allow me for a minute or two, I would like to put before it an idea gained from personal experience of the problem of the non-co-operative movement. If the House could only get into the Indian mind and see what really brought on this non-co-operation movement I think it would realise that there is a good deal of ground for Indian grievances. What happened was this. The reforms were more or less wrecked by the Rowlatt Bill. It was more or less an accident that the two things were running together. The Montagu Report was published in July, 1918, and very shortly afterwards the Rowlatt Committee published their Report. During the whole of the cold weather, up to February, the people were interested in that Report. They were agitating more and more during that period, but I do not believe there was any intention of finally non-co-operating. In February they found that the Government had brought forward a Bill based on the Rowlatt Committee's Report. To the Indians the Measure was very repugnant. They saw that the Government were going to press forward a Bill to give them certain reforms and that these reforms were offered to them as a reward for what they had done in the War. When the Bill was brought before the Imperial Legislature the Indian Members unanimously implored the Government not to proceed with it. They said, "We do not dispute the facts or findings of the Rowlatt Committee, we admit that these things occurred in Bengal"—and it was particularly in connection with

what did occur in Bengal that the Rowlatt Committee came into existence—"but we implore you to size up the general situation. We have difficulties in the country. We are trying to help you with your reforms, but if you insist on pushing this Bill through against our unanimous appeal it will make the position almost impossible for us in the country." I was in India at the time and they put a point which appealed to me on the ground that it was almost unanswerable. They said two years ago, when the British Empire was in great financial difficulties, and you did not know what was going to happen, you appealed to us for financial aid. You said, "We recognise you have done so well in the War and you are so thoroughly loyal, that we are not going to force you to contribute but we will leave it to a free vote of the Assembly." The vote was, I believe, unanimous, exception being taken to it by only one speaker. They voted off their own bat a contribution of £100,000,000 towards the assistance of this country in the War.

They brought that to the mind of the Government, and they said, "You did that when you were in great difficulties. Now that the danger is over, and you feel you have got us again, now, when we similarly implore you unanimously not to pass this, you absolutely go against us, you do not consider us at all, and you are going to force this Bill upon us." Moreover, they said, "A great deal of this crime for which the Rowlatt Bill was needed was due to the fact that we had no self-government at all. We believe that, if you do not force the Rowlatt Act, the mere reforms themselves will eliminate a great deal of this crime." But, they said, "We promise you that, if our forecast is not correct, and if these crimes do recur, if you then come before us and ask us for the powers of the Rowlatt Bill, we will pass them in a day." I submit, and I said so at the time, that that was a fair contention, and I think it showed very great want of imagination on the part of the Government of India in forcing that Bill through against them.

That, obviously, was a question which did affect the whole of the people of India, and especially the intelligent people, very much, and this was where Mr. Gandhi came in. He said, "This is a test process, and if you really do force

[Lieut.-Colonel T. Williams.]

this through against the unanimous desire of our Members in the Legislature, I and my friends will definitely refuse to co-operate." I said at the time that I thought the Indian Government ought to have gambled and not passed it, but, anyhow, they passed it, and that really, in my opinion—and it is confirmed by what many Indians have told me—was the start of non-co-operation, Amritsar, and all the other conditions which have followed from it. I think most hon. Members will admit that at any rate Indians had a grievance. Considering what they had done in the War, and the fact that they had voted this very large sum from India on a free vote of themselves in the Assembly, to be then treated like this when the danger was over would, I think, have made most of us act in exactly the same way as the Indians have acted.

I should like to suggest to the House that we are now at a point where, if we only exercise our imagination, we can get on terms again with the Indian people. I think we ought to live dangerously and gamble again. I think we ought to advance so rapidly that we should put the Indians themselves up against the difficulties of the situation. The difficulties of Dominion Government in India are enormous, but, as long as you keep refusing them any further advance, you will never get them into the mental attitude where they will sit down and discuss these troubles with you reasonably. My own feeling is that it would be better to risk whatever disorder might occur while the Central Government is strong, while you control the Army, and to give them the very largest measure which is possible of self-government in the Provinces, and even in the Central Government. I feel sure, and many advanced Indians agree with me, that I am correct in this, that the difficulties inherent in the problem are so great that, when they come up against them, they will then have to turn to us and ask for our assistance. The trouble is at the present moment that we are forcing our assistance upon them, and, therefore, they will not listen. I think it is only consistent with our own knowledge of human nature that, if you can only convert them into the attitude of needing you—because I am quite sure that they will need us—it will be well worth any trouble or disorders which may

occur in the process of getting to that position.

Hon. Members opposite seem to be afraid of any conference, but personally I am not afraid, because the situation out there is so very complex that it will be quite impossible for Indians themselves to suggest or frame any Constitution which will not be considered a very moderate Constitution, even by hon. Members opposite. I feel very sure of that, and, therefore, I think the Secretary of State is pursuing a perfectly sound policy in going just as far as he can at the present moment along those lines of conference. I think it would be a very great mistake if he were to take the course suggested by the Noble Lord of laying down a hard-and-fast line that we are not going to do anything till 1928, or 1929, or whatever the date is. You cannot dogmatise and say that things will only move at a certain rate every year. Things out there are moving faster and faster, and what you want to do is to try and get ahead of the times. I say, therefore, that the criticisms—or, rather, they were hardly criticisms, but mainly questions put by the Noble Lord referring to the action of the Secretary of State—are not sound; that the policy which is being pursued at the present moment of getting into as close touch, whether by letters, by conferences, or by any other means, with representative Indians, is a sound policy. As I have said, I believe the problem at the moment is mainly psychological, and what you have to do is to convert them from this attitude of disgruntlement into an attitude where they are prepared to talk reasonably and discuss the difficulties. To get into that position, I believe it is worth taking risks, and, therefore, I thoroughly approve of the policy which is being pursued at the present moment by the Secretary of State.

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER: I should like to take the opportunity of congratulating the last speaker on the very interesting contribution that he has made to this Debate. It is unfortunate that, at those times when we do get an opportunity of discussing the all-important matters which concern India, we are usually treated to one point of view only in this House. We have had no general Debate, and there has been no opportunity for the expression of opinions from all sides;

but when to-day we get such a contribution from a member who has spent many years in India, it is most valuable, and it shows that there are many points of view in the House that have not yet been expressed. I propose to confine my own remarks to three points that have been raised by the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton). The first is the question of the unfortunate letter that was published, written by the Secretary of State to an Indian gentleman. It was considered of such importance by the Secretary of State himself that he debated the matter for 55 minutes in another place. He evidently looked upon it as an important matter, and, of course, it is not for me to deal with his explanation, but I should like to refer to that matter at a little greater length than the Noble Lord did, because I do think that the trouble that has arisen, and especially the newspaper controversy that has arisen in India as the result of the publication of that letter, marks the Indian point of view on the policy of the present Government.

We know that the Labour party, before they undertook the responsibilities of office, had a most advanced policy as regards India. They openly proclaimed that they were in favour of Home Rule for India. Promises to an Indian are sacred. An Indian has a different way of looking at the spoken word from that which, possibly, we have here in the West. He looks upon these things as coming with full authority from people who intend to carry them out to the very letter when they have the opportunity, and I am not in the least surprised that the people of India have been greatly disappointed by what has occurred since the present Government took office. Their promises have not been carried out. They appeared at one time as if they intended to come out with a forward policy, but pressure was brought to bear upon them and they hesitated; and they are still hesitating to announce what their real policy regarding India is. That is misunderstood in India and it is more misunderstood still when promises, or suggestions of promises, are made in private correspondence by a person of the standing of the Secretary of State. I think the Government would be wise if they would come forward, before the House rises for the Autumn Recess, with

a statement of policy much more definite than they have made at present. I suggest that when they come to frame that policy they should first of all bear in mind the promises which have been made to India in the past and that they should take measures to carry out those promises to the very letter, because it is the letter of a promise that the Indian mind understands, and that whilst agreeing to carry out those promises to the very letter they should be very careful that on no account should new promises be made until we have redeemed those which have been made in the past. That is the position as I view it, and it will give the present Government plenty of work, if their term of office extends for several years, to redeem those promises.

I should like to refer to two of the most definite of those promises because we are apt to forget these things. I will start with the statement of Mr. Montagu, then Secretary of State for India, in August, 1917, when he made that very weighty statement with full deliberation in the middle of the War, at a time when Indian troops were fighting side by side with us and India was putting up vast sums of money to assist us in our time of danger. Mr. Montagu said:

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Government."

He went on to say:

"This latter policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and upon the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility."

Seeing that that was put out at the same time as the pronouncement of policy was put out, the people of India cannot say they were under any misunderstanding as to the manner in which the reforms were going to be carried out. The question now is, do the Government of India and the British Government in co-operation think that the time has come when there should be a further advance. We are told, and

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the suggestion has been made again by the Noble Lord to-day, that we have got to wait till 1929 before this question of further reforms can be reopened. I welcome this appointment of a Committee which is going to inquire into the possibilities of reform straight away. I hope after that Committee has reported, which, I understand, may be within two months from now, the Government will take further steps to deal with all matters that they think should be dealt with at once, because it is inconceivable to think that we are going to drift on for another five years with the present state of things in India. Non-co-operation with the Government has assumed serious dimensions. Great harm has been done to the country by the refusal of the Budget in the Legislative Assembly. But at the same time we have to recognise

that it has always been

2.0 P.M. announced in the British Parliament for hundreds of years that one weapon that the representatives of the people had was to refuse Supply if they thought their grievances had not been redressed. In that respect the Swaraj party in the Assembly were perfectly constitutional in their method of action, but the sting was taken out of their action when it is recognised that they knew all the time that there was other machinery which would carry on the Government of the country. So it was not defending the last ditch that they were doing. It may have been a gesture to show what they could do, but it was not the final act. The final act has harmed the country, and that is where the danger comes in in the future. There was a surplus in this Budget. It was a very good Budget for the welfare of the country. There was a surplus which was to be applied partly in reduction of the amounts which were to be paid to the Central Government by the Provinces, and through this Budget not being passed, the Provinces have lost that advantage which they would have had, and the consequence is that they have not had this surplus to spend on education and on the welfare of the Provinces generally.

May I refer again to these promises which have been made? It seems sometimes when we are listening to speakers on the other side of the House that the

very word "Swaraj" is objectionable to them, and that they are opposed to anyone who is going to voice this policy of Swaraj, which simply means, I understand, self rule for India. On 21st February, 1921, the Duke of Connaught opened the First Legislative Assembly at Delhi, and on behalf of His Majesty made the following speech to that Assembly:

"For years, it may be for generations, patriotic and loyal Indians have dreamed of Swaraj for their Motherland. To-day you have the beginnings of Swaraj within my Empire and wide scope and ample opportunity for progress to the liberty which my other Dominions enjoy."

I have spoken already of the great value that the Indian mind puts upon the words of people in an important position like the Secretary of State. But far more have they always been encouraged to take heed of the message their King Emperor sends them. Therefore, I think we must recognise that there has only been a forward movement. I am utterly opposed to the idea that the Government should be stampeded by any wild agitation in the matter, but to sit still and do nothing is the most dangerous thing they can possibly do at present. They must make up their mind what their next step is going to be, and I hope they will make that step the early appointment of the Royal Commission under the Act of 1919. It may be argued that it cannot be done. The suggestion has been made that it cannot be done. In this House, when Mr. Montagu was introducing the Government of India Act, and the matter was being discussed in Committee, he stated quite plainly that Clause 41 does not tie the hands of Parliament in any way whatever. There could always be a Commission appointed in the interim. I might say, too, there must be a Commission appointed at the end of 10 years. The House knew perfectly well what it was doing when it passed Clause 41, and the Government need have no hesitation to appoint that Commission if they think the time has come when an alteration of the law is absolutely essential.

The Noble Lord the Member for Horsham referred to the Resolution which has been passed by the Bengal branch of the National Convention. He used strong words in connection with that Resolution. I have not had the advantage of reading it and I will accept his explanation that the effect of it is more or less to condone an act of murder. It is

not wise to bring up this question. We have a proverb that the pot should not call the kettle black. We have seen what happened in Ireland, where one form of violence has led to another, and to-day of all days the Indian nation has before it some grave matters of importance in connection with the unfortunate violence which was used on our behalf at Amritsar. It is a most unfortunate occasion to have chosen to bring up this matter. The Indians have not forgotten that there was one case where 20 Sikhs were shot down and killed, and 30 wounded. They know perfectly well in India that during the recent strikes in Bombay many people were shot down in the streets. Amongst all the others, stands the horror of Amritsar, where the men who were wounded were not allowed to be touched, but were left there lying all night. Now, this matter is brought up the day after a Judge in an English Court has seen fit to condone cases of violence of that sort.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I think the House—

Mr. LANSBURY: On a point of Order. Does this close the Debate on India?

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr. Robert Young): Mr. Speaker has arranged a Schedule, as many hon. Members wish to raise topics. I presume this will finish the Debate on India.

Mr. LANSBURY: I will make my protest when Mr. Speaker is here.

Mr. RICHARDS: I think the House is exceedingly fortunate that on the last two occasions when Indian matters were being discussed we have had such well-informed speeches on the present conditions in India as we have had the pleasure of listening to to-day. It is not my intention to detain the House for more than a few minutes. I will endeavour to reply to some of the points raised by the Noble Lord who opened the Debate. He referred to the Resolution of the Bengal Branch of the National Congress of India. I know nothing of that Resolution beyond what has appeared in the newspapers, but I would like to remind the Noble Lord that the Sewany is essentially a pacific party. That is to say, the objective in view is what they call a non-violent and non-co-operative movement.

Viscount CURZON: Does that apply to the party led by Mr. C. R. Das?

Mr. RICHARDS: It does, in common with the rest of the party led by Mr. Gandhi, and I should be much surprised if there was any connection between the Bengal movement to which the Noble Lord referred and the constitutional party. It is a constitutional party in common with Liberals, Moderates and Independents. It is a party that is working for Home Rule in India. The distinguishing feature between it and the other parties is the speed at which it would like to advance in the direction of Home Rule, but, essentially, it is a purely constitutional party. The reforms that are being suggested, that is to say, the investigations, have been advocated by the Government of India itself. That is, by the men who have been attempting hitherto to work this particular piece of machinery. It is because the Government of India and the Provincial Governments feel that there is a difficulty in carrying out the provisions of the 1919 Act that they have instituted this inquiry into the working of the Act.

Perhaps the best way in which I could reply to the questions put to me by the Noble Lord, would be to cover very shortly the ground that led up to the appointment of this Committee. The first point we have to remember is that on the 18th February this year a Resolution was carried in the Assembly recommending a revision of the Government of India Act, with a view to establishing full responsible Government, and for the purpose of summoning a round table conference to frame a new constitution, with a view to its ultimate enactment by Parliament. That Resolution was carried in a perfectly constitutional fashion in the Assembly by a majority of 76 to 48. In the course of that Debate, two important speeches were delivered by the leader of the Government, Sir M. Hailey. I will read rather longer extracts from those two speeches than were read by the Noble Lord:

"Now for the action we propose to take. We do not limit ourselves to demanding that the system should be further tested. We propose to make a serious attempt to investigate justifiable complaints against the working of the scheme in practice—"

He was speaking on behalf of the people who were attempting to work the machinery—

"to assess the causes, and to examine the remedies necessary. We claim that this must precede any general inquiry into the policy

[Mr. Richards.]

and scheme of the Act, or general advance within the Act itself. In investigating these difficulties and defects in the actual working of the present system, we shall consult the local Governments on the subject, and we shall not close our ears to representations from outside. It may be that the remedy for these difficulties will be found by using rules making the power within the Act: I refer to the utilisation of those Sections to which reference is so often made, 19A, 15A, and 96D. It may even be—I can say nothing as to this—that the inquiry may show that some changes are required in the structure of the Act in order to rectify the definite and ascertained defects experienced in the actual working."

In a speech ten days later, he said:

"We have again considered the position very carefully, and I am anxious to emphasise that in what I say I speak with the full authority of His Majesty's Government. We still hold to the general position I took up on behalf of the Government. Before His Majesty's Government are able to consider the question of amending the constitution, as distinct from such Amendment of the Act as may be required to rectify any administrative imperfections, there must be full investigation of any defects or difficulties which may have arisen in the working of the transitional constitution now in force. Neither they nor we would be justified in considering changes in that constitution unless they were in possession of full information which our investigations will place in our hands. In 1919, Parliament, after the fullest consideration, laid down a scheme transitional in its nature, but, nevertheless, carefully devised with a view to effecting steps necessary for progressive realisation of ideals embodied in the Preamble of the Act. It is not to be supposed that the British people would be lightly inclined to consider a change in that constitution, and it is bound to concentrate attention for the present on such imperfections in working as may have been disclosed by the experience of the last three years. I said that we have carefully reconsidered the general position and we hold to the precise attitude which I then took up, save in one respect. If our inquiries into the defects in the working of the Act show the feasibility and possibility of any advance within the Act, that is to say by use of the rule making power already provided by Parliament under the Statute, we are willing to make recommendations to this effect; but if our inquiries show that no advance is possible without amending the constitution, then the question of advance must be left as an entirely open and separate issue on which the Government is in no way committed. To that extent, the scope of our inquiries goes somewhat beyond that originally assigned to it, but I must again emphasise the fact that it does not extend beyond that scope to the Amendment of the Constitution itself."

These facts were printed in full in reply to a question which I gave to the hon. and gallant Member for Dulwich (Sir F. Hall) on 3rd March.

What have the Government of India done to give effect to the promises made on that occasion? They have started, in the first place, by appointing an official expert committee, consisting of three members of the Governor-General's Council and three Secretaries of the Government of India, for the purpose of inquiring into the legal and constitutional potentialities of the situation, and as to whether any advance is possible under the rules framed under the Act or by an Amendment of those rules. The second thing they did was to send a circular letter to all the local Governments of India, which are as much concerned in the working of the Act as the Government of India itself, quoting Sir Malcolm Hailey's speeches, and asking them to investigate the difficulties arising from or defects inherent in the working of the present transitional constitution, and to see how far the situation could be improved without taking measures so far reaching as to involve fundamental changes in the policy and powers of the Government of India Act.

It was the intention of the Government of India that this official expert Committee should address itself also to an inquiry relating to the Central Government similar to that relating to the local governments, and it had been asked to do so. On receipt from the expert official committee of its preliminary report on the technical aspect of this question, the Government of India modified their original intention as to the field of its activities and decided to reconstitute the committee by the addition of representatives who were non-officials, and to charge it with a two-fold duty. The first was to make the investigation which they had originally intended it to make into the defects and the possibilities of removing them within the constitution as affecting the Central Government, and to advise the Government of India accordingly; the second was to consider the reports of the local governments under the constitution as affecting the provinces, and to advise as to the recommendations which should be based thereon.

I think that my hon. Friend, if he will turn up the answer which I gave on the 2nd of June, will find that those terms of reference are taken almost exactly from the speeches that were delivered by Sir Malcolm Hailey, and merely reproduced

under appropriate heads and categories the scope, purpose and limits of the inquiry as indicated in the first instance by Sir Malcolm Hailey at the beginning of February. That is to say, the terms and the scope of the inquiry that is being conducted at the present time are exactly those which are outlined by Sir Malcolm Hailey, with this addition, that non-official members have been asked to co-operate with the committee in the inquiry that is being conducted at present.

Mr. FISHER: Has the inquiry begun?

Mr. RICHARDS: No. The difficulty is that the personnel of the newly constituted Committee has not been completed yet. But the expert inquiry has been more or less completed.

Earl WINTERTON: Have not two members been appointed?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen some reference in the Press, but I have no official information on the point.

Earl WINTERTON: I understood that the Committee was in process of being appointed now. It appears to me that there is some hitch in the matter. Why is there this delay in appointing the non-official members?

Mr. RICHARDS: I do not know that there has been any delay. I have seen references in the Press.

Mr. FISHER: Will the Committee sit in private?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am afraid that I could not answer that without making inquiry. That is the position with regard to this inquiry at the present moment. With regard to the letter of my Noble Friend the Secretary of State to a member of the Swaraji party, I quite agree with the views of the last speaker. We have got to recognise that the Swarajists have been returned to the Assembly in a perfectly constitutional fashion. We have got to recognise also that they form the majority of the members of the Assembly at the present moment. That is, they are in exactly the same position as hon. and right hon. Members opposite. They are His Majesty's Opposition as far as the Legislative Assembly is concerned, and I suggest that when my Noble Friend gets a letter from a member of the Legislative Assembly it is only natural that he should reply to it. In addition, I would like to point out that the letter contains the well-

known views not only of the Secretary of State on the two particular questions to which it refers, closer co-operation with the Swarajists in the working of reforms, and the views, which are held, I believe, by almost every party in this House, with regard to the difficulty of working any real general democratic scheme with the communal system of representation. There is no reference to a change of policy at all. I think that the storm that has been created in connection with that letter was not even a decent storm in a teacup.

Earl WINTERTON: The hon. Gentleman has not answered my question. I was not objecting to the views expressed in the letter. I asked whether we could have an assurance that in future when a Secretary of State wished to communicate his views on important matters of policy to the Indian people, he should do so, as every previous Secretary of State has done, through the Government of India, and not by means of correspondence with an opposition member of the Madras Assembly.

Mr. RICHARDS: My answer is that there was no indication of any change of policy at all. If my noble Friend will turn up the Montagu-Chelmsford Report he will find there a condemnation of the communal system of representation.

Earl WINTERTON: There has been no change of policy?

Mr. RICHARDS: I can assure him that on questions of policy the usual practice is followed in every case. This is merely expressing an opinion of the Secretary of State, which was shared by Members of the Noble Lord's party. I do not think that there is anything more than that in that letter. It certainly does not represent any change of policy on the part of the Secretary of State.

Monday, 16th June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MOHAMMEDAN JUDGES.

1. Colonel Sir **CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can state in which of the High Courts of India there is a Mohammedan judge and in which there is not?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): There is one Mohammedan judge in the Calcutta, Bombay, Allahabad and Lahore High Courts respectively, and none in the High Courts at Madras, Patna and Rangoon.

Sir C. YATE: Will the Under-Secretary take into consideration the appointment of Mohammedan judges?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will mention that to my Noble Friend (Lord Olivier).

INDIA COUNCIL (ARMY REPRESENTATIVE).

2. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary for India if he will state for how long there has been no representative of the Indian Army on the India Council, and when the Secretary of State intends to appoint one?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part is since General Sir Edmund Barrow's retirement on the 29th February last. As regards the second part, my Noble Friend is considering the question of filling the vacancy.

MEDICAL SERVICES

3. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering the disastrous effects in Mesopotamia of the retrenchment in hospitals establishment in the Army in India carried out in pre-War days, the India Office is prepared to sanction the proposed reduction of 1,957 beds in British and 2,041 beds in Indian station hospitals, of 15 officers of the Indian Medical Service, and 60 assistant surgeons?

Mr. RICHARDS: These reductions have been or are in process of being carried out, with the sanction of the Secretary of State where that was required. They are partly due to reductions of combatant strength, and in any case will not seriously affect the improvements introduced since the experience of Mesopotamia.

Sir C. YATE: Does the hon. Gentleman consider it safe to effect these reductions in the army in India at the present time?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

5. **Mr. HOPE SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many assistant-surgeons of the

Indian Medical Department were dismissed during the financial year 1923-24, and how many it is proposed to dismiss during the current financial year; whether any representations have been received on this subject; and whether, in view of the very serious unemployment among Anglo-Indians at the present time, the Government of India can take steps to avoid reduction of cadre until some of the unemployed have been able to obtain other work?

Mr. RICHARDS: A reduction of 92 assistant-surgeons has been sanctioned, including 32 who are in excess of the establishment, but it is not known how many of these were discharged in 1923-24. Certain representations on this and other matters relating to the Anglo-Indian community have been received and transmitted to the Government of India. As in the case of other services, retirements are being carried out on favourable terms, and I fear I cannot hold out hope of any exceptional measures in the case of this Department to mitigate the hardship involved in the reductions.

6. **Mr. SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the unrest which exists in the Indian Medical Department, in view of the reduction of its staff; whether it is the intention of the Government of India to dispense with the services of that Department altogether; whether the Department has asked for an official inquiry into the whole matter; and whether the Government of India can see its way to institute such an inquiry?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is not intended to dispense with the Indian Medical Department. Certain representations have been received regarding the present condition of the Department. My Noble Friend awaits the Government of India's views before deciding on the request for an inquiry.

Sir H. CRAIK: Is the Under-Secretary aware that unless they wish to get rid of this service altogether recruiting will become almost impossible?

Mr. RICHARDS: I think it will be very difficult.

PUBLIC SERVICES (LEE COMMISSION).

4. **Mr. SIMPSON** asked the Under-Secretary whether the Government is taking any and, if so, what steps to carry

out the recommendations contained in the Lee Commission Report; whether these recommendations require consideration by the Indian Legislature before the issue of Orders; and whether the Government of India will be instructed to introduce the financial reforms recommended at the earliest possible date?

Mr. RICHARDS: No final orders will be passed until the Report has been discussed by the Indian Legislature in its September Session, but the necessary preliminary work is meanwhile being pressed on with all possible speed both here and in India. As regards the last part of the question, I have already stated, and the Government of India have stated in their Legislature, that any financial relief ultimately sanctioned will have effect from 1st April, 1924.

Sir HENRY CRAIK: Is it not the case that the Secretary of State has power, independently of the Legislative Council, to carry out the scheme proposed by the Commission?

Mr. RICHARDS: I believe that is so.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (COMMITTEE).

7. Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Committee appointed by the Government of India to inquire into the working of the reforms and securing remedies for difficulties which have arisen in connection therewith will report to Parliament or to the Government of India; and, if the latter, whether he will take steps to ensure that a copy of such Report shall be laid before Parliament at the earliest possible date?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Committee will report to the Government of India, and any proposals which may result from its recommendations will be those of the Government of India. Parliament will necessarily be fully informed of such proposals as His Majesty's Government decide to adopt, and I cannot at the present stage give any undertaking that the Committee's Report will be presented in advance of the decisions which may result from it.

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER: Can the hon. Gentleman now give the names of the unofficial members of this Committee?

Mr. RICHARDS: Not at present.

BERAR.

8. Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can state if any opportunity has been given to the people of the province of Berar to express their wishes on the letter addressed by the Nizam of Hyderabad to the Viceroy of India; whether any assurance has been given that no steps will be taken in the matter without giving such opportunity; and, if so, through what channel was this assurance conveyed, to whom was it given, and by what method is it proposed to carry the assurance into effect?

Mr. RICHARDS: An assurance was given in December, 1921, in the form of an official statement in the Central Provinces Legislative Council, that no steps in the matter of the re-transfer of Berar would be taken without giving to the people of Berar a full opportunity of expressing their wishes. No occasion for giving effect to this assurance has yet arisen.

GENERAL DYER.

Dr. HADEN GUEST (*by Private Notice*) asked the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to the statements made by Mr. Justice McCardie during the trial of the action by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, formerly Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab, claiming damages for alleged libel against Sir Sanharan Nair, formerly member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy of India, with reference to the punishment of General Dyer by the Government of India and the Government of Great Britain; and whether, in view of the grave political and social reaction which these statements may have in India, he will order an inquiry to be made as to whether this is an abuse of privilege?

Mr. DIXEY (*by Private Notice*) asked the Prime Minister if his attention has been called to the result of a recent case in the High Court which strongly suggests that General Dyer has not been fairly dealt with by the authorities, and in view of the fact that General Dyer is seriously ill, will he consider immediately what steps can now be taken to reconsider the matter?

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Before the question of the hon. and gallant Member for Penrith (Mr. Dixey)

is answered, will the Prime Minister say whether he is aware that the learned Judge had not got the documents in the Dyer case before him, and had not the full evidence which was in possession of the Government of India?

The PRIME MINISTER: With reference to the question of the hon. Member for North Southwark (Dr. Guest), I have heard it now for the first time. No copy of the question reached me, and it has not been left at any of the usual places. With regard to the second question, I only received notice of it at 1 o'clock to-day, and I cannot attempt to give a considered answer at such short notice. If the hon. Member will put his question on the Paper, I will deal with it.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

NIZAM OF HYDERABAD (CLAIM TO BERAR).

Lieut.-Colonel MEYLER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can state, in connection with the claim of the Nizam of Hyderabad to the rendition of the Berars, if the attention of the Secretary of State for India has been drawn to the principle of impartial and independent investigation laid down in paragraph 308 of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms; and whether it is his intention to set up a Commission as therein provided?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Secretary of State is aware of the recommendations in the paragraph quoted, and a standing procedure has been prescribed for the purpose of giving effect to them at the discretion of the Governor-General; but I cannot say at present what procedure will be adopted in this particular case to which the hon. and gallant Member refers.

ROYAL AIR FORCE (ACCIDENTS).

Captain TERRELL asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air whether he will state the accidents, fatal and otherwise, which have occurred in connection with Royal Air Force work in India in

each of the last three years; and whether the Indian Government is now fully satisfied that the best possible material is at the service of those who use it?

Mr. LEACH: In answer to the first part of the question, the accidents in the Royal Air Force in India involving death or personal injury in the last three years ending on 31st May in each case were:

1921-22	...	...	...	7
1922-23	...	...	...	4
1923-24	...	...	...	14

It should be added that the number of hours flown was considerably greater in the last year than in the two preceding years combined. In answer to the second part of the question, I cannot answer for the Government of India, but the Air Ministry have supplied the best possible material, and there is no reason to believe that it is not giving satisfaction.

Tuesday, 17th June, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ARMY OFFICERS (PENSIONS).

Mr. M. WILSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to reduce the pensions of ex-officers of the Indian Army as and from the 1st July next; and, if so, by what amounts?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am afraid it is unlikely that a final decision will be ready by 1st July, in which case action will be taken provisionally. An announcement will be made shortly.

Wednesday, 18th June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

GENERAL DYER.

54. Dr. HADEN GUEST asked the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to the statements made by Mr. Justice McCardie during the trial of the action of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, formerly Lieutenant-Governor of the

Punjab, claiming damages for alleged libel against Sir Sankaran Nair, formerly member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy of India, with reference to the punishment of General Dyer by the Government of India and the Government of Great Britain; and whether, in view of the effect of this case on political opinion in India, the Government propose to hold any further inquiry into the circumstances of General Dyer's removal?

55. Mr. DIXEY asked the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to the result of a recent case in the High Court, which result strongly suggests by the finding of the jury that General Dyer was not fairly dealt with by the authorities; and, in view of the fact that General Dyer is seriously ill, will he consider immediately what steps can be taken to reconsider the position of General Dyer and the treatment accorded to him?

The PRIME MINISTER: The findings of the jury on the questions submitted to them do not contain any indication or suggestion that General Dyer was not fairly dealt with by the authorities, and His Majesty's Government agree with the late Government in regard to the judgment which was passed upon his actions.

Dr. GUEST: In view of the statements during the trial, will the Government take an early opportunity of dissociating themselves in the most emphatic way from any attempt to govern India by force or the suggestion that such methods are justifiable?

Sir K. WOOD: Has the Prime Minister observed on the Notice Paper a Notice of Motion by the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley (Mr. Lansbury) dealing with this question; and, inasmuch as it affects the position of a High Court Judge who is daily trying cases, does he propose to give any facilities for this discussion?

Mr. SPEAKER: Proper notice should be given of that question.

Mr. LANSBURY: Is it possible to get an answer from the Prime Minister as to giving time for the discussion of this Judge's conduct?

Mr. SPEAKER: Perhaps the hon. Member will put that question on the Paper.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what steps are being taken by the Government of India to improve the efficiency of Indian municipalities, especially those in Bengal and the United Provinces?

Mr. RICHARDS: Local self-government being a transferred provincial subject, it is not open to the Government of India to intervene in its administration. The efficiency of the municipalities in any particular province is the responsibility of the Minister in charge of local self-government in that province and through him of the provincial legislative council.

ARMY OFFICERS (PAY).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in the revision of the pay of officers of the Army in India that is to come into force next July, due consideration is being given to the rise in the cost of living that has occurred in India since 1919; and what that rise in the cost of living is calculated to be?

Mr. RICHARDS: The present cost of living for Europeans in India is estimated to be about 60 per cent. higher than in 1914. My present information does not enable me to say how much, if any, of this has occurred since 1919. Local variations in India preclude such an exact comparison as we are able to make in this country. The revised rates will certainly take full account of the present cost of living.

ARMY DEPARTMENTS (WARRANT OFFICERS).

Mr. HARMSWORTH asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware of the hardship felt by warrant officers of the Indian Corps and Department who, except in the case of indulgence passages, are required to pay their own passages to this country and back when granted leave; and whether the formerly existing practice of free passages will be restored?

Mr. RICHARDS: No change has been made in the rules regarding the grant of passages to warrant officers of Indian Army Departments when proceeding on

leave, and the hon. Member is under a misapprehension in thinking that they were formerly entitled to free passages when proceeding out of India on leave on private affairs. They are, however, granted free passages for themselves and their families when on sick leave from India.

MR. PETER ZAVITISKI.

Mr. T. JOHNSTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that an American tourist in India, Mr. Peter Zavitski, has been harassed and annoyed by the police because he has publicly paid a tribute to Mr. Gandhi; and if steps will be taken to see that the annoyance complained of is stopped?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware that the person named has in a published letter complained that the police watch him, but I have not heard it suggested that the ground for his surveillance is that indicated in the question.

Thursday, 19th June, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE (PENSIONS).

Captain BENN asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many individuals would be affected if the permanent officials of the Indian Civil Service who were invalided out owing to war disabilities before 7th November, 1921, and who at that date were on leave without allowances and not in active Civil Service, were allowed to profit as regards pension by the revised rules which came into force on that date; and what the approximate cost of this concession would be?

Mr. RICHARDS: Accurate figures are not available, but the number cannot be large. I assume that the rules referred to are the premature retirement rules. As the hon. and gallant Member is aware these were introduced for officers retiring in quite different circumstances.

TEA PLANTATIONS, ASSAM (CHILD LABOUR).

Mr. J. HARRIS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he

is aware that on the Doom Dooma Tea Company's plantations of Assam, out of a total working population of 8,691, there are 1,559 children at work; what is the average age of these children, how many hours they are required to work on the plantations, and what wages are paid to them?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information, but will inquire.

Monday, 23rd June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

TARIFF BOARD.

1. **Mr. HANNON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that applications have been received by the Indian Tariff Board from the paper, printing ink, boots and shoes, and cement and magnesium chloride industries, requesting that protection should be afforded to these industries; and whether, since the grant of such protection will operate against British export trade with India, it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to endeavour to come to some arrangement with the Government of India on this question?

The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE for INDIA (Mr. R. Richards): The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The Secretary of State does not think that he could usefully consider the propriety of making any representations to the Government of India before the Tariff Board have reported.

Mr. HANNON: Is there no means by which friendly suggestions can be made in cases of this kind in the interests of British trade?

Sir HENRY COWAN: Are the Government in favour of Protection in India while opposed to Protection in this country?

Mr. RICHARDS: The views of the Government are quite well known. With regard to the first supplementary question, I think it would be unwise to make any representations until the Tariff Board has reported.

Captain WEDGWOOD BENN: Is there any reason to suppose that the Government of India have been perusing and profiting by the literature of the Tariff Reform League?

Mr. NEIL MACLEAN: Can the hon. Gentleman explain why these British products, which are manufactured by more highly-paid labour than similar products in India, are able to compete in India with the more cheaply produced goods?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is more a matter for debate.

REFORMS.

2. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will lay upon the Table a statement giving the purport of the deliberations between the Indian deputation headed by His Highness the Aga Khan and the Secretary of State on Indian reforms and other cognate matters?

Mr. RICHARDS: There have been no deliberations between any Indian deputation and my Noble Friend. He has received statements of views from the deputation referred to by my hon. Friend and from other deputations and individuals, but he is not prepared to publish reports of their purport.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Can the hon. Gentleman state the names of the deputation headed by His Highness the Aga Khan?

Mr. RICHARDS: I must have notice of that question.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS (DELEGATION).

3. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can state the composition of the Indian delegation at the forthcoming Conference of the League of Nations and by whom the delegation was appointed?

Mr. RICHARDS: I hope to be able to announce the names of the delegates (who are appointed after consultation with the Government of India) in the course of a very few days.

CAWNPORE (SEDITION TRIAL).

5. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has now received a copy of the evidence and the judgment given against the prisoners recently on trial for sedition at

Cawnpore; and whether he will lay a full and complete statement of the proceedings at these trials upon the Table of the House?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not yet received the Papers referred to and cannot say if my Noble Friend will decide that Papers shall be laid before the House.

Lieut.-Colonel JAMES: Is it a fact that subscribers to the defence fund will be supplied with free copies?

Mr. LANSBURY: When any papers arrive will the House have an opportunity of seeing them?

Mr. RICHARDS: That depends on the view that the Secretary of State takes of them.

Mr. LANSBURY: Have we no views on them?

HON. MEMBERS: No.

Mr. LANSBURY: Wait until they come!

NON-CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

8. **Mr. T. JOHNSTON** asked the Under-Secretary for India whether he is aware that the Madras Government is discharging officials who contribute to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, or associate with non-co-operators, or subscribe to the non-co-operators' press; that Mr. Subba Sao has been discharged from the telegraph department for the official reason that he is either a non-co-operator himself or has active sympathy with the non-co-operators; and whether he will make inquiries with a view to the discontinuance of this policy?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no official knowledge of the individual case, or of any general orders of dismissal. But all Government servants are prohibited from subscribing in aid of any political movement in India, and know of the existence of this prohibition.

MURDER OF MR. DAY (SWARAJIST RESOLUTION).

9. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to Mr. C. R. Das's support of the resolution passed by the Swarajist party at Sirajganj paying homage to the murderer of Mr. Ernest Day; whether he

[Lieut.-Colonel Howard-Bury.]

is aware of the indignation of the European community in India at the eulogy of murder as a political weapon; and whether the Government of India contemplates taking any legal action against the movers of this resolution?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen in the Press reports of indignation meetings in India. But I have not received any official intimation that legal proceedings are contemplated, or any report of the precise terms of the resolution.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Does the hon. Member dissociate himself from the expression of the Secretary of State for India in his letter to Mr. Satyamurti, in which he states that the Swarajists were using a perfectly constitutional weapon? Does he consider murder a constitutional weapon?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am bound to call attention to the condemnation of this resolution by Mr. Gandhi himself

Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY: I know Mr. Gandhi, but I mean the Secretary of State.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

12. Mr. THURTLÉ asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, with regard to the committee appointed by the Government of India for the purpose of making recommendations for economy in military expenditure, and which contains no non-official members, he will advise the appointment of such a non-official expert as Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Tyer or Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not heard of the committee to which my hon. Friend refers, but if such a committee is being set up, I have no doubt the Government of India will exercise a wise discretion in the selection of expert members.

O'DWYER-NAIR CASE (MR. JUSTICE MCCARDIE).

4. Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will direct the complete transcription of the recent judgment of Mr. Justice McCardie in the O'Dwyer-Nair case to be

transmitted to the Government of India, and ask for an expression of their opinion on extra-judicial matters raised by him in the light of the Hunter Commission Report?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend will arrange for a transcript of the judgment in this case to be furnished to the Government of India, who will no doubt consider whether any observations thereon may appear to be called for.

38. Mr. LANSBURY asked the Prime Minister whether the Government will grant time for the discussion of the Motion standing in the name of the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley, dealing with the remarks of Mr. Justice McCardie during a recent trial?—["*To call attention to the following statement reported as having been made by Mr. Justice McCardie in the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice during the trial of the libel action brought by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, against Sir C. Sankaran Nair, formerly a member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, namely: Speaking with full deliberation and knowing the whole of the evidence given in this case, I express my view that General Dyer, in the grave and exceptional circumstances, acted rightly, and, in my opinion, he was wrongly punished by the Secretary of State for India; and to move, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying that he will cause the removal from the Bench of the High Court of Judicature in England of Mr. Justice McCardie, on the ground that he is unfitted to carry out the judicial duties attaching to his high office.*"]

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald): I have come to the conclusion that a discussion on this subject would only add to the harm that has been done in India by the words complained of. However unfortunate the words have been, they clearly do not constitute the kind of fault amounting to a moral delinquency which constitutionally justifies an Address as proposed. It ought in fairness to be borne in mind that the objectionable passage occurred, not in a considered written judgment, but in an oral charge to a jury delivered at the conclusion of a lengthened and somewhat

heated trial, and the very form in which it was couched shows that the learned Judge was not informed as to what took place. As I have already stated, His Majesty's Government completely associates itself with the decision of the Government (not merely the Secretary of State) of the day. His Majesty's Government will always uphold the right of the judiciary to pass judgment, even on the Executive, if it thinks fit, but that being the right of the judiciary, it is all the more necessary that it should guard itself against pronouncements upon issues involving grave political consequences, which are not themselves being tried.

Sir K. WOOD: Having regard to the statement that the right hon. Gentleman has just made, and the undesirability of a Motion remaining on the Paper attacking a Judge, who is daily trying cases in the High Court, will he use his influence to have this Motion withdrawn?

Mr. LANSBURY: No one need use any influence. I am perfectly satisfied with the statement made by the Prime Minister.

Mr. RONALD McNEILL: Were not the observations of the learned Judge made in consequence of evidence given before him on oath, and, therefore, were they not, in point of fact, of more value than statements made by other people who have not heard the evidence?

The PRIME MINISTER: I had better not be drawn into a discussion. The importance of the point is this—and I think every Member of this House will recognise it—that evidence may have been laid regarding certain matters in this trial, but the main point and purpose of the trial did not concern itself with the *obiter dicta* which the learned Judge let fall in the course of charging the jury, and those words were calculated to have a very serious effect upon Indian public opinion, and for those reasons I have couched the answer in the way that I have done.

Lieut.-Colonel JAMES: Is it not a fact that the trial which was sought by Sir Michael O'Dwyer was in the main asked for in order to justify the action of his subordinates?

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ELECTION EXPENSES.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India when it is intended to introduce rules to fix the maximum scales for election expenses in India similar to those in force in the United Kingdom?

Mr. RICHARDS: I cannot give a date, but the Government of India intend to make proposals as soon as sufficient data are available. This may prove to be the case as the result of the last elections.

INDIAN STATES (PRESS LAWS).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India which of the Native States of India have introduced Press laws; and how far these Native State laws differ from the laws in force in British India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The only definite information that I have is that a Press Act is, or was, in force in Baroda. I have no detailed information as to its provisions.

"WORKERS' WEEKLY" (PROSCRIPTION).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether issue No. 60, of the 28th March 1924, of the "Workers' Weekly" is the only number of that journal which has been proscribed in India as it contains seditious matter, or whether all issues of that paper have been proscribed; and, if not, why not?

Mr. RICHARDS: Certain other issues of the paper named have been proscribed in some provinces. As regards the last part of the question the Governments in India can only use their powers of proscription against those issues which fall within the provisions of the law.

POSTAL WORKERS (MAGAZINE).

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware that the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in India has refused permission to a postal official, named G. V. Bhawe, to start a Marathi non-political monthly magazine for the purpose of supplying news about postal unions and providing matter calculated to increase the efficiency of workers in the Indian Post Office; if it is the policy of the Govern-

ment of India not to continue the existing permission for the publication of journals conducted by their own subordinates; and whether he will take steps to ascertain the reason underlying the refusal of the Director-General in this case, with a view to redressing any grievance that has arisen?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances of this case, as to which he has at present no information.

PRISONERS IN CHAINS.

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of the Visapur Gaol Inquiry Committee, whether, seeing that the bel-chain by which prisoners are chained together at night is still in use in India gaols, and that no scavenger is employed in such cases to prevent insanitary conditions, he will advise the Government of India to abolish this practice?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India have brought to the notice of the local Governments the Jail Committee's strong condemnation of this method of securing prisoners, and have expressed a hope that it will be prohibited except when it is absolutely indispensable as a precaution against escape.

COLONIES COMMITTEE.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the date by which the Colonies Committee, now in London, is expected to complete its deliberations and present its Report to the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The function of the Colonies Committee is to discuss certain questions with the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and to make representations to him. The date of the conclusion of their work does not depend on themselves alone, and cannot yet be definitely forecast.

RAZMAK (POLITICAL AGENCY).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the need for the establishment of the newly-established political agency at Razmak, in the Wana country, and the total capital and annual cost of same; and whether this cost is

debited to His Majesty's Government or to the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: No information regarding the establishment of a political agency at Razmak has been received from the Government of India.

SIKH SHRINE REFORMS MOVEMENT.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is in a position to state whether the proposed Birdwood Committee to deal with the Sikh shrine reforms movement was actually appointed; what were the terms of reference; and if the proposed inquiry has broken down, and the reasons for same?

Mr. RICHARDS: The terms of reference were stated in my reply to the hon. Member for Bilston (Lieut.-Colonel Howard-Bury) on the 29th April, but the Committee was never actually appointed, as it proved impossible to arrive at an understanding with the Sikh members of the Legislative Council and secure satisfactory representation of all interests concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State has received any despatches from any of the Indian Provincial Governors with regard to the working of the reforms; and if these can be laid upon the Table of the House?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. The second part does not, therefore, arise.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE (DELEGATES).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the composition of the Indian delegation at the International Labour Conference at Geneva; and whether the delegates are duly elected, and by whom?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government delegates are Sir Louis Kershaw and Mr. A. C. Chatterjee. The employers' delegate is Sir Alexander Murray, nominated by the Government of India on the recommendation of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce. The workers' delegate is Mr. Joseph Baptista, who is reported by the

Government of India to have obtained more substantial support from the unions than any other candidate.

Tuesday, 24th June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

WIRELESS NEWS SERVICE.

73. **Mr. HANNON** asked The Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the British official wireless news which has hitherto been distributed to, and published in, India has now ceased owing to the superiority of the French and German over the British Government's radio installations; and whether any steps are being taken to re-establish the British wireless service with improved installations?

74. **Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY** asked the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the British official wireless news that is distributed in India has now ceased; whether he can state the reasons for this; and whether he is aware that in consequence of this the German and French radio stations have now a free field for themselves?

Mr. HARTSHORN: I understand that there is difficulty in receiving the British official wireless messages in India during the adverse atmospheric conditions which prevail in that country at this time of the year. I am aware that the range of the German and French radio stations is greater than that of any existing British station, but this unsatisfactory state of affairs will be remedied when the new Government station now being erected at Rugby is finished.

Earl WINTERTON: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that when the station has been erected it will be possible to communicate quite clearly with India?

Mr. HARTSHORN: I am advised that is so.

Wednesday, 25th June, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

EAST INDIA WOOL (DISINFECTION).

43. **Mr. WARDLAW MILNE** asked the Minister of Health what the intention of the Government is regarding the suggested compulsory disinfection of East India wool; whether he is aware that if this Regulation is brought into force it is probable that the article secured will be inferior in quality, thus resulting in a serious handicap upon the carpet trade of this country; whether, as it is advisable to put all buyers on equal terms if disinfection is proved to be necessary at all, he will consider the possibility of arranging for this disinfection to be carried out at the source of supply; and if he will suspend the bringing of such an Order into force pending full and proper inquiry into the whole matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Arthur Henderson): I have been asked to reply to this question. The whole matter is being fully considered and no decision has yet been taken. I am not aware of any foundation for the allegation in the second part of the question.

Mr. MILNE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that other countries, which are keen competitors with us in this trade, have rejected these disinfection proposals?

Mr. MACKINDER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the recommendation for the disinfection of dangerous wool was unanimously made by the Departmental Committee on Anthrax; that the disinfection of wool treated in this way will undoubtedly save human life; and that the work of disinfection should be extended to other dangerous wools?

Mr. MILNE: Has there been any suggestion by the workers—

Mr. SPEAKER: Further questions had better be put down on the Order Paper.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL [*Lords*].

Read a Second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE (IRAQ).

4. **Mr. MILLS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the total amount expended out of Indian revenue during 1918-21 for military expenditure in Iraq?

Mr. RICHARDS: No additional expenditure has been debited to Indian revenues in consequence of military operations in Iraq. In accordance with the Parliamentary Resolutions of 1914, Indian expenditure on oversea operations has been limited to the normal charges that would have been incurred had the troops remained in India.

KHALSA COLLEGE, AMRITSAR (PROFESSOR CHATTERJI)

5. **Mr. MILLS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he has any information as to unrest in the educational centres in Amritsar as a result of the dismissal of Professor Chatterji, of Khalsa College; and if he will ascertain the reason of such dismissal?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Khalsa College is not a Government institution, and I have no information beyond the Press reports. It appears from these that Professor Chatterji was dismissed by the responsible governing body.

LEE COMMISSION REPORT.

6. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India when the Secretary of State intends to carry into effect the recommendations arrived at in the Lee Commission Report?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer the hon. and gallant Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. Hope Simpson) on the 16th June.

Sir C. YATE: May I ask what was that reply?

Mr. SPEAKER: We cannot have it again.

LIQUOR SHOPS, CALCUTTA.

8. **Mr. CECIL WILSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether all liquor shops in Calcutta have been removed from those wards of the city in which the principal colleges and schools are situated; and, if so, can he state whether the removal was due to the action of the authorities or to the action of the owners, and if the former, can he ascertain the grounds for their action?

Mr. RICHARDS: The matter is one for which responsibility rests with the Governor of Bengal acting with his Ministers, and I have no information on the subject.

DRUG TRADE.

9. **Mr. C. WILSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether there is in India any equivalent, and, if so, what, to the Dangerous Drugs Act; whether, if there is no such Act, in view of the increased consumption of opium and cocaine in the Punjab, as revealed by the Annual Report of the Excise Administration for 1922-23, the Government propose legislation to deal with the matter; and, if so, when it will be introduced?

Mr. RICHARDS: The drug trade in India is regulated by the Opium Acts of 1857 and 1878, the Excise Act, 1896, a number of Provincial Acts, and Rules under these Acts. The provisions of these Acts and Rules are not identical with those of the Dangerous Drugs Act, but they enable the Government of India to fulfil her obligations under The Hague Convention. The consumption in the Punjab in 1922-23, though greater than in the previous year, was only 25,494 grains, or about 1 grain per thousand of the population. This is very greatly below the rate of consumption in European countries.

10. **Mr. C. WILSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the consumption of opium as a drug has been steadily increasing in Assam; whether he can state what the consumption per head was in 1903 and in any recent year; what income is derived by the Government from such consumption in both years; and under what Regulations is the sale of opium conducted?

Mr. RICHARDS: The consumption per head was 85 grains in 1902-1903, and 525 grains in 1922-1923. During the year 1912-1913 the consumption per head was 1075 grains, but there has been a steady decline since that year. The Regulations are described in a pamphlet of which a copy is being sent to my hon. Friend.

Mr. WILSON: Will the hon. Gentleman kindly answer the second part of the question, with regard to income?

Mr. RICHARDS: That part of the answer contains a number of figures, and I will, therefore, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following are the figures referred to:

The gross revenue from licence fees and duty was 17 lakhs, seventy-nine thousand nine hundred and seventeen rupees in 1902-1903, and 35 lakhs, eighty-six thousand and twenty-seven rupees in 1922-1923.

TRANSFERRED AND RESERVED DEPARTMENTS (EXPENDITURE).

13. **Mr. WALLHEAD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the total expenditure retrenched in the transferred and reserved Departments, respectively, in the different provinces in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The information asked for is being collected, and I will supply it to my hon. Friend as soon as possible.

PROVINCIAL AND SUBORDINATE SERVICES.

14. **Mr. WALLHEAD** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether His Majesty's Government contemplates the taking of any steps to improve within a reasonable period the pay, prospects, and general conditions of the provincial and subordinate services in India on lines similar to those recommended by the Lee Commission for the superior civil services in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: As my hon. Friend is aware, no decision will be taken on the Lee Commission Report until after the September session of the Legislative Assembly. The question of extending any of the recommendations to provincial services will be dealt with at the earliest practicable date in consultation with the local governments, who are the authorities primarily concerned.

Sir C. YATE: May I ask what that date will be?

Mr. WARDLAW MILNE: Is it the intention of the Government of India to set up a Commission similar to the Lee Commission?

Mr. RICHARDS: I cannot answer that question at the present moment.

AIRSHIP STATION.

51. **Captain Viscount CURZON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India

whether the site of the new Government airship station has yet been selected; and, if so, where it will be located?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for AIR (Mr. Leach): I have been asked to reply. The site has not yet been selected.

ROYAL INDIAN MARINE.

52. **Viscount CURZON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many ships at present constitute the fleet of the Royal Indian Marine; how many officers and men are borne on the books; what is the present position of the service; and whether any decision has yet been reached with regard to its future?

Mr. RICHARDS: The fleet at present consists of 10 vessels, excluding steam trawlers, small steamers and launches. There are 48 executive officers, 32 engineer officers, 57 warrant officers and 1,170 men. No change has taken place in the position of the service, except that the troopships are being disposed of. The future of the service is still under consideration.

Viscount CURZON: The hon. Member says that warships are being disposed of. Are they being disposed of to any private interest, and has any communication taken place with the Admiralty on the subject?

Mr. RICHARDS: I should like notice of that question.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (COMMITTEE).

Mr. WARDLAW MILNE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether Mr. M. A. Jinnah only accepted office as a member of the Committee appointed by the Government of India to inquire into the working of the Government of India Act under a special understanding regarding the scope of the inquiry; what the conditions were which Mr. Jinnah laid down; and whether the conditions were accepted?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information indicating or suggesting that Mr. Jinnah attached any conditions to his acceptance.

WARRANT OFFICERS, INDIAN UNATTACHED LIST.

Rear-Admiral SUETER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether warrant officers of the Indian unattached list are now treated in exactly the same way as regards marriage allowance as warrant officers in the British service; if not, what are the reasons for making any difference between these two classes of warrant officers; and whether the retrospective effect of the marriage allowance granted to members of the British service in India from the 4th October, 1920, has been made applicable to the warrant officers of the Indian unattached list?

Mr. RICHARDS: Warrant officers of the Indian unattached list have since 1st January, 1922, been treated in exactly the same way in regard to marriage allowance as warrant officers of the British Service in India. The second part of the question does not arise. In the case of the unattached list, the Government of India have not seen their way to grant marriage allowance from an earlier date than 1st January, 1922, but the question still awaits a final decision.

GAOL ADMINISTRATION, ASSAM.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the statements of Colonel C. H. Bensley, the Inspector-General of Prisons of India, relating to gaol administration in Assam, to the effect that our gaols are turning out criminals, and urging on all those who have to deal with juvenile cases to explore every other alternative before awarding a sentence of imprisonment; and what steps, if any, have been taken by the Government of India to remedy this state of affairs in the Assam gaols?

Mr. RICHARDS: If my hon. Friend will turn to paragraphs 5 and 7 of the Assam Government's Resolution, at the end of the Report from which he is quoting, he will find the information which he desires. The same Resolution also describes further action taken by the Local Government in 1923 to give effect to the recommendations of the Indian Gaols Committee.

JAMSHEDPUR.

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India (1) if his attention

has been called to the housing conditions within the area of Jamshedpur and to the fact that only 33 per cent. of the workpeople are provided with accommodation; and whether, in view of the fact that three families are living in homes suitable for one family and six persons in one room of ten feet by eight feet, he will cause inquiries to be made;

(2) if his attention has been called to the conditions of employment in the Tata Steel and Iron Company; whether he is aware that this company controls the whole of the liquor licences in Jamshedpur, and, being owners of the whole of the land and fields, refuse permission to the inhabitants to use any vacant space unless permission is obtained, and whether, as this edict operates over an area of 25 square miles, he can take any steps to improve the situation?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information on the points referred to, but will ask for a Report.

UNCOVENANTED SERVICE (PENSIONS).

Mr. RAFFETY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware of the dissatisfaction amongst retired members of the uncovenanted service, who retired before 23rd July, 1918, as to their pensions; and whether it is proposed to hold an inquiry into the merits of this claim that they should receive the increases granted or recommended in the case of those who retired after that date?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. and gallant Member for South Portsmouth (Sir H. Cayzer) on 28th May, 1924.

Tuesday, 1st July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

CEYLON (TAVERNS).

82. **Mr. CECIL WILSON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies why the native population of Ceylon, although desiring to take local option polls in

[Mr. C. Wilson.]

regard to the Udugama and Ratoto taverns, have been refused permission by the Government agent; whether he is aware that these taverns are largely used by Indian coolies; and why it has been considered necessary to provide for their obtaining toddy when it is not considered necessary for the Cingalese?

Mr. THOMAS: I have received no official report about this matter, but it appears to have been fully discussed in the Legislative Council of Ceylon in August last. Under the rules made by the Governor and confirmed by the Legislative Council the Government agent had no power to take local option polls in regard to any tavern mainly serving a population of Indian coolies

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (CUSTOMS AND EXCISE REVENUE).

Mr. C. WILSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, the amount of revenue derived by the Government of India from the sale of intoxicants in the years 1874-75, 1881-82, 1891-92, 1901-02, 1911-12, 1918-19, 1919-20, 1920-21, 1921-22, 1922-23, respectively, and the percentages which this revenue bore to the total revenue in each of the years?

Mr. RICHARDS: The information required is given in the following table. Excise revenue figures are given for spirits and drugs, including opium. The revenue shown is gross revenue up to 1920-21, but the figures for 1921-22 and 1922-23 represent gross revenue less a deduction for "Refunds." In all cases the figures are for British India:—

	1874-75.	1881-82.	1891-92.	1901-02.	1911-12.
	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.
Excise Revenue on spirits and drugs...	234·6	342·7	511·7	611·5	1141·4
Customs Revenue on Liquors ...	28·9	40·7	59·0	70·8	124·6
TOTAL ...	263·5	383·4	570·7	682·3	1266·0
Percentage of above Total to Total Revenue of Government.	5·2	5·2	6·4	5·9	10·2*
	1918-19.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.	1922-23.
	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.
Excise Revenue on spirits and drugs...	1733·6	1925·9	2043·7	1718·6	1855·2
Customs Revenue on Liquors... ..	110·7	138·0	188·0	212·8	231·5
TOTAL ...	1844·3	2063·9	2231·7	1931·4	2086·7
Percentage of above Total to Total Revenue of Government.	10·0	10·5	10·8	10·4	10·6

* The large increase in the Excise Revenue during the decade ending 1911-12 was due not merely to the expansion of consumption which is normally greater in times of prosperity, but also to the imposition of progressively higher rates of duty and the increasingly effective control of the excise administration, leading to a continual substitution of licit for illicit consumption.

The Customs duties on imported liquors during the same period were also increased substantially.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION.

Sir J. LEIGH asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if the proposal for the abolition of communal representation discussed in the Secretary of

State's letter addressed to a member of the Madras Executive Council has the approval of the British Government; and whether he has received representations, official and unofficial, from members of

the Indian Government against the proposal?

Mr. RICHARDS: No proposal for the abolition of communal representation has been discussed in any letter of the Secretary of State or considered by His Majesty's Government; and no representations, official or unofficial, from members of the Indian Government have been received by him on the subject adverted to.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) [MONEY].

Considered in Committee [*Progress, 25th June*].

[Mr. ROBERT YOUNG in the Chair.]

Question again proposed,

"That for the purposes of any Act of the present Session making provision with respect to leave of absence from India of the Governor-General, Commander-in-Chief, and Governors and members of Executive Councils, it is expedient to authorise the payment out of the Revenues of India of any salaries, leave allowances, and travelling or other expenses which may become payable under such Act."

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): It is essential that I say a word or two about this Resolution. It relates to a Bill which was given a Second Reading the other evening, and was debated at some length in another place. The Bill is intended to remove an anomaly that has existed for 150 years. Under the present law it is impossible either for the Viceroy or for the Commander-in-Chief to leave India for Europe during their period of service. The Bill will remove that anomaly. When either for reasons of health or for matters of State the Viceroy leaves India temporarily, his place will be taken by another person. The Money Resolution will cover the expense involved, which will come out of the revenues of India.

Sir ROBERT HAMILTON: Can we have some information as to the rate of leave allowance to be drawn by these officers when on leave? I see in the Bill that the allowances are to be drawn up by the Secretary of State in Council. What is to be the leave allowance of those officers who come home on urgent private

affairs? Are they to be on a different footing from those who come home in the ordinary course of leave or on public business?

Mr. BUCHANAN: I notice that the Bill applies merely to viceroys, officers and governors, and in fact to everyone except the poor people with whom we are mostly concerned. Does the Under-Secretary intend to bring in a Bill to give the same advantages to private soldiers in India? It seems to me that the House is prepared to discuss questions about the pay of officers when they get leave for private business, but on the other hand we can never get a man home from the Army even on compassionate grounds. I cannot understand why, in a so-called democratic community, we should set up a certain standard for officers and not apply it to privates, whose business might be just as important as that of anyone else. We have been discussing to-day and for many days past how to raise money to extend schemes of social reform. May I suggest that it might be well to give these generals and governors-general permanent leave of absence, bring them home and not allow them to go back. It might be better for India and for us. I am new to Parliamentary procedure and I may not properly appreciate this Resolution, but I cannot see the justice of a proposal which gives special privileges to officers but does not extend the same privileges to the rank and file. I expected something different from the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) who, though an individualist of individualists, has always been known as a democrat of democrats. In my younger Socialist days I was constantly lectured by him, because my idea of Socialism did not give enough freedom to the individual. Now he is here supporting a proposal to give to the officer or the governor-general a right which is withheld from the private soldier. He cannot defend it and I hope, at least, to have an assurance from him that a similar proposal will be introduced applicable to the private soldier in India however humble his rank and station. I feel sure my appeal will not fall on deaf ears.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Wednesday, 2nd July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

INDIA STORE DEPARTMENT, LAMBETH (DISPUTE).

36. Mr. HOFFMAN asked the Minister of Labour if he has yet been able to secure a settlement of the difference existing between the Government of India and its workers employed at the India Store Department in Belvedere Road, Lambeth; and, if not, if he can usefully make any statement in regard to the dispute?

Mr. SHAW: I have not yet been able to secure a settlement of the difference existing between the Government of India and the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks in respect of the workers employed at the India Store Department. As my hon. Friend is probably aware, my Department is still in communication with the parties, and I do not think that I can usefully make any statement on the matter.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ARMY COMMISSARIES (PENSIONS).

Sir H. CAYZER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any decision has been arrived at as to the revision of pensions of commissaries, deputy and assistant commissaries of the Indian Army; and, if not, whether an early decision may be expected?

Mr. RICHARDS: I regret that no decision has yet been reached on this matter. Steps will be taken to hasten it.

ARMY OFFICERS (PAY).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering that when the pay of officers in India was raised in 1919, in conformity with the raising of the pay of officers at home, the increase was calculated at the rate of 10 rupees to the pound sterling, whereas the increase granted to the rank and file was at the rate of 15 rupees to the pound, the new rates of pay for officers in India that are to be brought into force on the 1st July, 1924, will be calculated on the same

rate of exchange as that granted to the men?

Mr. RICHARDS: I regret that I am not at present in a position to state by what method provision will be made for the exchange factor in the forthcoming scales of pay for officers.

PROVINCIAL SERVICES.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the result of the correspondence with the Government of India regarding the position of British members of the All-India services being treated on a different footing to British members of the provincial services in India in the matter of retirement on proportionate pensions under the reform scheme of 1919; and whether the Secretary of State will now give effect to the original proposals of the Government of India and the recommendation of the Joint Committee and withdraw the limit prescribed in 1921?

Mr. RICHARDS: The question of the position of members of the provincial services is a large one, and consultation is necessary not only with the Government of India but also with the local governments, which are the authorities primarily concerned. This is being undertaken, and I cannot make any statement at present or promise one in the immediate future.

FAMINE, MADRAS (RELIEF MEASURES).

Sir D. NEWTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware that famine is prevalent in the Anantapur District of the Madras Presidency; and whether he is satisfied that adequate relief measures are being taken to cope with it?

Mr. RICHARDS: In reply to inquiry the Government of India state as follows:

"Madras Government report that all possible relief measures have been taken in the two Taluks where famine has been declared. Four relief works opened, gratuitous relief also given. One test work will be opened shortly in another Taluk. 300,000 allotted for loans under Loans Act. Collection of nearly 400,000 current revenue postponed in six Taluks and 45,000 of last year's arrears remitted in one Taluk. Special arrangements made for opening Government Fodder Depot and sale of fodder cheaply, especially to the poorer classes."

PASSPORTS REFUSED.

Mr. TURNER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is

aware that the Government of the United Provinces refused, without giving any reasons, to grant passports to Babu Shiva Prasad Gupta and his wife to proceed to Europe, in spite of the fact that Babu Shiva Prasad Gupta had been advised to take his wife to Europe for medical advice and treatment, and that she could not go to Europe unless he accompanied her; and whether he will make inquiry into the causes of this refusal?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware of the refusal to grant a passport to the persons named, and my Noble Friend has received a report upon the subject, which has satisfied him that it would not be right for him to interfere with the discretion of the Indian authorities in the matter.

Mr. TURNER asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Government of Bengal have refused a passport to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to proceed to Europe for medical treatment; and whether he will inquire into the circumstances of this refusal?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware that a passport was recently refused to the Maulana, though the ground on which it was applied for was not that indicated in the question. My Noble Friend is not prepared to interfere with the discretion of the Bengal Government in this case.

Thursday, 3rd July, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS (DELEGATION).

Mr. J. HARRIS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any undertaking has been given to the Council of State to consider favourably the appointment of an Indian as the leader of the Indian delegation to the League of Nations Assembly; and whether he is yet in a position to state the decision of the Government in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not aware of any such undertaking as that referred to having been given, and no decision by the Government on the question has been invited.

WARRANT OFFICERS, UNATTACHED LIST (MARRIAGE ALLOWANCE).

Rear-Admiral SUETER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can see his way to press on the Indian Government the desirability of granting the marriage allowances to warrant officers of the unattached list to date earlier than 1st January, 1922, and to place this class of warrant officer on exactly the same footing with regard to retrospective marriage allowances as their colleagues in the British service?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am afraid that I cannot anticipate the final decision which will, I hope, be arrived at shortly.

Monday, 7th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICES.

1. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering that certain municipalities in India, in which full self-government has already been attained, are inefficient in the matter of public services such as water supply, roads, etc., and that the financial position of many municipalities is causing concern, the Government of India will call on the members of these municipalities either to show their fitness for local self-government or else to resign; if not, will he state what steps it is proposed to take to enable Indians to show their fitness for self-government?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I would refer the honourable and gallant Member to the answer which I gave to a somewhat similar question which he put to me on 18th June. The Government of India no longer control municipalities in Governors' Provinces.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (INQUIRY).

2. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether considering that the Government of India have now appointed a Committee to inquire into what Amendments to the Government of India Act appear necessary to rectify any administrative imper-

[Sir C. Yate.]

fections, the Secretary of State will now authorise the Government of India to suspend the Legislative Assembly and provincial councils till such time as the deliberations of the committee have been completed?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer is in the negative.

Mr. PETHICK-LAWRENCE: Will the Government of India take into account the possibility of extending the scope of this Commission to deal with some of the questions which are causing unrest at the present time?

Mr. RICHARDS: Nothing would be gained by referring again to the terms of reference of this inquiry which have already been given in the House on more than one occasion.

INDIAN SUBJECTS, FIJI.

3. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Report of the deputation which the Government of India sent to Fiji over two years ago has yet been published; and what is the reason of the delay in publication?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. The question of the conditions under which Indians live in Fiji has been referred by the Government of India to the Committee appointed by them to confer with the Secretary of State for the Colonies on questions concerning Indians in the Colonies, and in the circumstances it is thought desirable to postpone consideration of the question of publication.

ELECTED BODIES (NON-OFFICIAL MEMBERS).

4. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that village munsiffs of South India are part-time officers of the Government but are treated as non-officials for purposes of election to local boards and to the Legislative Council; and whether he will inquire into this matter, in view of the importance of having non-official members of elected bodies free from Governmental influence?

Mr. RICHARDS: It is not within the power of my Noble Friend to interfere with the regulations made by local Governments defining eligibility for membership of local bodies, as this matter apper-

tains to a transferred provincial subject. As regards Legislative Councils, part-time Government servants are declared by a rule under the Government of India Act to be non-officials for the purposes of that Act, and I see no sufficient reason for altering that rule.

MILLS (HALF-TIMERS' EDUCATION).

5. **Mr. R. RICHARDSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can give particulars of the methods adopted, either by the Government or by mill owners, for educating the half-timers employed in the mills?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer the hon. Member to the information given on pages 212 to 219 of the Eighth Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India (1917-22), Volume I, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

CAWNPORE DISTURBANCE.

6. **Mr. RICHARDSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has received the official Report on the shooting of strikers at the Cawnpore cotton mills on 4th April last; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House, together with the evidence on which it is based?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will place in the Library a copy of this Report. I have not received a copy of the evidence from the Government of India, and I cannot, therefore, comply with the request made in the last part of the question.

CHILD LABOUR, AHMEDABAD.

7. **Mr. RICHARDSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, since child labour is greater in Ahmedabad than in any other industrial centre, any steps have been taken to carry into effect the proposal of the Government of Bombay in 1921 to appoint a special certifying surgeon for that district?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Secretary of State has no information on this subject, but inquiry will be made.

KALIFAT COMMITTEE (PASSPORT TO TURKEY).

10. **Mr. W. M. ADAMSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the reasons for the refusal of a passport to a Mahommedan deputation appointed by the Kalifat Committee for the purpose of visiting Turkey?

Mr. RICHARDS: There was no refusal to grant passports to a deputation as such. But, as was explained in the Legislative Assembly last March, Government were unable to grant passports to certain persons proposed as members of a deputation to Turkey because some of them had been convicted of offences against the State or of inciting Government servants to disaffection, and others were not of the Mahomedan religion.

Mr. ORMSBY-GORE: Would not any Kalifat Committee now be interfering with the internal affairs of Turkey?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is another question.

ARMY OFFICERS (PENSIONS).

13. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering that British service lieutenant-colonels were given a 43 per cent. rise on their pension while Indian Army lieutenant-colonels were only given a 14 per cent. rise, he will, in fixing the new rates of pension that are to come into force, take into consideration the fact that the 5½ per cent. reduction that is to be applied to the whole pensions of British service officers will mean a reduction of 27½ per cent. in the post-War increases to the British service officer but of 46 per cent. to the Indian Army officer; and will he take steps to see that the Indian Army officers are not unfairly treated in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: Due attention is being paid to the point to which the hon. and gallant Member refers.

COURT-MARTIAL, KARACHI.

14. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the court martial held at Karachi on a member of the Royal Air Force charged with assaulting Mr. R. K. Sidhwa; whether he is aware that, although the Commander-in-Chief sanctioned the prosecution, the defendant was acquitted despite his confession of guilt and the testimony against him of a number of witnesses, including four soldiers; and whether he will call for a report?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information regarding this case, but will ask for a report.

KENYA.

INDIANS (POLL TAX).

58. **Mr. SCURR** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies the number of Indians sent to prison every year since 1913 for failure to pay the poll tax levied in Kenya?

Mr. THOMAS: I have not got the information necessary to enable me to answer my hon. Friend's question, but I will obtain it from the Governor.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BRITISH ARMY.

LIEUTENANT C. H. CLENDINING.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is now in a position to state whether it is his intention to appoint a commission or committee to hold a public inquiry into the case of Lieutenant C. H. Clendining?

Major ATTLEE: My right hon. Friend intended to discuss the whole case with the Army Council last month, but he has unfortunately been prevented from doing so by his indisposition and consequent compulsory absence from London. He will, no doubt, deal with the matter as soon as he is well enough to attend the War Office, but pending his return I am not in a position to make any further statement.

PRISONERS.

Mr. HUDSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what facilities are given to prisoners in India for appealing against any decision of the gaol authorities concerning them?

Mr. RICHARDS: Prisoners in gaols in India have no right of appeal, but there is a system of frequent visits to gaols by duly appointed official and unofficial visitors to whom the Indian Gaols Committee recommended that the power should be given of inspecting the gaol records (which would include the punishment book), of putting any questions to prisoners out of the hearing of any gaol officer, and of communicating their observations to the Inspector-General. The Government of India commended this system to the Local Governments, but I

cannot say what are the precise arrangements in force in each province.

Mr. HUDSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether prisoners in Indian gaols are permitted to see the written orders, rules, and provisions of the gaol code?

Mr. RICHARDS: Gaols in India are a provincial subject and Manuals of gaol administration are published by various Provincial Governments. I have no information as to the practice in the several provinces with regard to the grant of permission to individual prisoners to consult the Manuals.

PASSPORTS.

Mr. WINDSOR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that certain Indians carrying on business in England, and who had reserved stalls at the British Empire Exhibition, were refused passports when they desired to return to England; and the reasons for this refusal?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information as to any such refusal of passports.

TRAVELLERS TO CEYLON (POLICE INQUIRIES).

Mr. WINDSOR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the inquiries addressed by the police authorities to Indian travellers from India to Ceylon; and whether the same questions are addressed to non-Indian travellers?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information on the subject. Perhaps my hon. Friend will communicate to me the material on which his question is based.

HONG KONG.

INDIANS.

Mr. HUDSON asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that British-Indian subjects on arrival at Hong Kong are required to report for inquiry at the police headquarters; and whether other British subjects have to comply with a similar order?

Mr. THOMAS: The law of Hong Kong requires that all persons of non-Asiatic race or nationality and all Indians must

report at a police station within 12 hours of their arrival in the Colony unless they have been examined by a police officer or examination officer at the time of their arrival.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) [MONEY].

Resolution reported,

"That for the purposes of any Act of the present Session making provision with respect to leave of absence from India of the Governor-General, Commander-in-Chief, and Governors and members of Executive Councils, it is expedient to authorise the payment out of the Revenues of India of any salaries, leave allowances, and travelling or other expenses which may become payable under such Act."

Resolution agreed to.

Tuesday, 8th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BRITISH ARMY.

LIEUTENANT C. H. CLENDINING.

21. **Mr. COSTELLO** asked the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the publication of the names of the witnesses whose evidence Lieutenant C. H. Clendining wishes to be taken on his behalf in support of his allegation of false imprisonment in India in the year 1917; and whether he proposes to take the evidence of these witnesses, subject to cross-examination?

Major ATTLEE: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the latter part, I would refer the hon. Member to my reply yesterday to the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley.

Wednesday, 9th July, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

MURDER, ASSAULT.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he has received

any particulars of the murder of Mr. Whitten by coolies, on a tea estate in Assam, owing to his having reported their work to be of indifferent quality?

Mr. RICHARDS: The fact of this murder has been reported, and a further report on it, after investigation, has been promised.

UNIVERSITY DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS (RECOGNITION, UNITED KINGDOM).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering the largely increased number of passes in the arts and science examinations of the Calcutta University reported in the quinquennial report on educational progress in Bengal, and the conclusion drawn therefrom that there has been a steady lowering of standard, the question of levelling up the standard of examinations in Indian universities to that of British universities, so as to secure the recognition of Indian examinations in the United Kingdom, has been put before the conference of delegates from the various universities in India at its meeting at Simla for consideration; and, if not, what steps it is proposed to take in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: No report of the proceedings of the conference in question has yet been received, but it is understood that the equivalence of Indian degrees and diplomas and their recognition in the United Kingdom was among the subjects for discussion.

Thursday, 10th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

ROYAL AIR FORCE: OPERATIONS.

59 and 60. **Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for Air (1) whether the Royal Air Force has been in action, since the present Government took office, in any dependencies or mandated territories other than Iraq; and, if so, what were the circumstances;

(2) on how many occasions the Royal Air Force has been in action since the present Government took office, otherwise than in Iraq; what were the occasions; and whether bombs were

dropped or machine guns brought into action, and against what objectives?

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: May I point out, Mr. Speaker, that the first question is intended and does refer to British territory, and the second question to territories other than British?

Mr. LEACH: The Royal Air Force has been in action, outside Iraq, on two occasions since the present Government took office, on both occasions on the North-West Frontier of India. The first was at Razmak, on 19th April, 1924, when an aeroplane directed the fire of a section of howitzers against a village, which was shelled in reprisal for the sniping of patrols in the neighbourhood. The second was on 25th and 28th May, when bombs and machine guns were used against two villages of the Mahsuds, who had committed several serious outrages and had been warned that if they did not comply with certain terms, including the return of Hindus kidnapped and sold and the surrender of rifles, air or other action would be taken against them. Three out of four sections of the Mahsuds complied with these terms; the fourth failed to do so, and were consequently attacked.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: When these villages were bombed with machine guns, was any warning given so that non-combatants and children could be removed?

Mr. LEACH: That is always done.

Lieut. - Commander KENWORTHY: Was it done in this case?

Mr. LEACH: Yes.

Viscount CURZON: Has it not always been one of the chief points of Liberal policy to do away with slavery?

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

AUXILIARY AND TERRITORIAL FORCES COMMITTEE (REPORT)

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Auxiliary Force and the Indian Territorial Force Committee have yet reported; and, if not, when is it expected that the Report will be issued?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Report of the committee has not yet been received. The Government of India anticipate that the deliberations of the committee will occupy some time.

CANTONMENT MAGISTRATES.

Sir P. RICHARDSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether cantonment magistrates who performed military duties during the War are under the same conditions as to pay and pensions as military officers on the active list?

Mr. RICHARDS: Generally speaking, cantonment magistrates reverted to military employment during the War received treatment similar to that of ordinary military officers. But if the hon. Member has in mind a case in which there appears to have been differentiation, I shall be glad to look into it.

Monday, 14th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

NEW DELHI (DECORATIVE WORK).

1. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will give an undertaking that the work of decoration in New Delhi will be given to Indian artists and craftsmen?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Robert Richards): My Noble Friend feels sure that the Government of India will approach this question with every desire to encourage Indian arts and crafts.

ASSAM TEA PLANTATIONS (INDENTURED LABOURERS).

2. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the conditions of recruitment, rates of pay, hours of labour, and welfare conditions of the indentured labourers employed in the tea plantations of Assam; whether it is the duty of any official of the Government to instruct the labourers as to the terms of their contract; and whether any steps are taken by the Government to see that the terms of the contract are kept by both employer and employed?

Mr. RICHARDS: The system of recruiting labourers under contract under the Assam Labour and Emigration Act has been discontinued for some time. It is not the duty of any Government official to instruct labourers as to the terms of any contract that they may wish to enter into outside that Act. In the event of breaches of contract on either side, the ordinary remedy in the courts is available.

AKALI MOVEMENT.

3. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the misrepresentations and hatred of the Government displayed by the Akali propaganda published in the extremist Sikh Press; and, considering that the organisation of the Akalis, have refused the conference and the generous terms offered by the Government through the Birdwood Committee and the elected Sikh members of the Punjab Legislative Council and by devoting itself to fanning the flame of anti-government hostility, has now grown into formidable danger to the other communities in the Punjab as well as to other sections of the Sikhs, will he state what special action is to be taken to maintain law and order in the Punjab?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am aware of the extreme writings of a section of the Press in connection with the Akali agitation. As regards the last part of the question, the policy of the Punjab Government, which has the full approval of the Government of India and of my Noble Friend, is to maintain order and public security by consistently applying the law against all offenders, and at the same time to neglect no means of arriving at a stable and equitable solution of matters in controversy, with due regard to all the interests that are affected.

Sir C. YATE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that this Akali agitation has now become a purely political and revolutionary movement, without any religious features whatsoever, and will the Government of India take steps to put down this revolutionary movement?

Sir HENRY CRAIK: Is it not well to leave this matter to the Governor of the Punjab and his assistants on the spot?

Mr. RICHARDS: With regard to the second supplementary question, I think it is well. With regard to the first, it has always been partly political and partly religious.

Sir C. YATE: Does not the hon. Gentleman know that religion is quite out of it now?

SEDITION CHARGES, CAWNPORE.

4. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, whether the Secretary of State for India has now received copies of the evidence given in the recent trials for sedition at Cawnpore; and, if so, will he lay copies upon the Table of the House?

Mr. RICHARDS: The evidence referred to has not yet been received.

5. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that nearly 150 persons have been arrested in the Cawnpore district charged with sedition; and will he tell the House what is the actual nature of the charges preferred against these men?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information of any such arrests having been made in the Cawnpore district.

Lieut.-Commander KENWORTHY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that these men are being arrested because they advocated the land for the people?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no information as to that.

Mr. LANSBURY: Will the hon. Gentleman make inquiries, seeing that it was a Reuter telegram that conveyed this information, and they are notoriously accurate?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will make inquiries.

TRADE UNIONS.

11. **Mr. R. RICHARDSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any legislation is contemplated by the Government of India for legalising trade unions, and to enable such bodies to be protected from civil or criminal actions when performing trade union functions?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India contemplate legislation enabling trade unions to register, and according

a large measure of protection from civil and criminal actions to such registered unions.

IMPRESSED LABOUR.

12. **Mr. R. RICHARDSON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the system of impressed labour for Government work, either civil or military, still continues; and, if so, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the rules and ordinances governing it?

Mr. RICHARDS: Certain enactments of the Indian legislatures, copies of which will be placed in the Library, provide for the requisitioning of labour for emergencies, such as the repair of irrigation works, and in exceptional circumstances.

INDIANISATION.

13. **Mr. BATEY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any action has been taken on the resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly calling for the unrestricted admission of Indians to the naval, military, and air forces?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes, Sir. The whole question of the admission of Indians to the various arms was carefully considered, along with other questions relating to the defence of India, in 1922, by the Committee of Imperial Defence, upon whose recommendations the existing policy of Indianisation was laid down by His Majesty's Government in 1923.

CAVALRY REGIMENTS (REDUCTION).

14. **Mr. BATEY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the War Office objected to the reduction of the military establishment of India by three cavalry regiments, and that as a consequence of such objections only two regiments have been removed despite the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee, he will state the amount of the annual contribution which the War Office has agreed to make towards the cost of this regiment, and what proportion of the expense this contribution represents?

Mr. RICHARDS: The decisions on the Retrenchment Committee's recommendations for the reduction of the military establishment of India were not taken by any one Department, but by His Majesty's Government, as the matter affected the

[Mr. Richards.]

disposition of the Imperial forces as a whole. The War Office do not contribute directly towards the cost of the cavalry regiment which it was decided to retain on the Indian establishment. They have agreed to pay £75,000 a year for two years to Indian revenues in consideration of various factors connected with the general scheme of reduction, of which the cost of the regiment in question was only one aspect. The last part of the question, therefore, does not arise.

Sir C. YATE: Is the hon. Gentleman not aware that the military forces in India have been reduced now below the margin of safety?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not aware of that.

PUBLIC WELLS AND SCHOOLS.

45. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India in which of the Provincial Legislative Councils resolutions have been passed permitting the use of public wells, schools, etc., by the backward and labouring classes of India; and which of the municipalities and local boards have given effect to this resolution?

Mr. RICHARDS: Resolutions to this effect were adopted last year in the Bombay and Central Provinces Legislative Councils. I have no information to enable me to answer the second part of the question.

Sir C. YATE: Cannot the hon. Gentleman give me one single instance in which this has been carried out?

EAST AFRICAN COMMITTEE.

57. **Mr. ROBERT RICHARDSON** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the extensive interests of Indians in East Africa, he proposes to appoint a representative Indian on the East African Committee?

Mr. THOMAS: No, Sir. The membership of the Committee has not been decided on any basis of representation of local interests. I have no doubt that the Committee will have ample opportunity of ascertaining the views of Indians on matters within the terms of reference.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

INDIA OFFICE.

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many Indians are on the advisory, technical, political or industrial staff at the India Office; and, if none are employed, will he consider the appointment of such as are competent for offices which are, or may fall, vacant?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not quite sure what are the appointments to which my hon. Friend refers. Appointments to the establishment of the Secretary of State in Council are made as the result of open competitive examination, for which Indians are eligible. There are no Indians on the establishment. Certain appointments in the India Office requiring special qualifications are made by selection, and there are three Indians, so appointed, on the Council of India. One Indian is also employed in the Library.

VICEROY'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

Mr. MILLS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any Labour representative is on the Advisory Council of the Viceroy of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: If my hon. Friend is referring to the Viceroy's Executive Council, the answer is in the negative.

ARMY OFFICERS (PAY, BURMA).

Sir P. RICHARDSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether Army officers proceeding from India to Burma receive a special Burma allowance on account of the increased cost of living in the latter country such as is given to Government officials, civil servants, police, public work departments, etc.; and, if not, whether it is proposed to give a Burma allowance to Army officers, and on what scale?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. I understand that the matter is being considered by the Government of India in connection with the impending revision of pay.

GOLD (SALE).

Mr. W. M. ADAMSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India

whether he will publish the correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State relating to the sale of £2,000,000 of gold from the Currency Department?

Mr. RICHARDS: The correspondence on this matter is very voluminous and my Noble Friend does not consider that any adequately useful public purpose would be served by publishing it.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS (INDIANS).

Mr. W. M. ADAMSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of Indians holding positions of secretaries to the Government of India in the various Departments in the Central Secretariat?

Mr. RICHARDS: On the 1st May this year one permanent appointment of secretary to the Government of India was, and is still, held by an Indian; there is an Indian financial adviser on military finance with the status of a secretary; and Indian officers are officiating as additional joint secretary and deputy-secretary in the Legislative and Education Departments respectively

LEAGUE OF NATIONS (DELEGATES).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether delegates representing Indian self-governing states have been appointed to attend the forthcoming meeting of the League of Nations to be held in September; by whom the delegates are appointed and to whom they are responsible; and can he give the House the names of such delegates?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part is in the negative. Delegates are not appointed to represent the Indian States as such. The answer to the second part is that the delegates are appointed by, and are responsible to, the Secretary of State acting in consultation with the Government of India; to the third part, that the delegates are Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, His Highness The Maharaja of Bikaner and Sir Muhammad Rafiq.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Legislative Assembly in India was consulted before the appointment of Lord Hardinge to represent India at the meeting of the League of Nations in

September next; will he inform this House by whom Lord Hardinge and the other members of the delegation were appointed; was any effort made, either in this country or in India, to discover whether the members of this delegation represent, directly or indirectly, the views and opinions of representative Indians on either national or international questions; and will he give the names of the members of the delegation Lord Hardinge is to lead?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part is in the negative. It is not usual for Executive Governments to consult their legislatures in making such appointments. The answers to the second and fourth parts have been given in my reply to Question No. 1. The answer to the third part is in the affirmative.

ELECTIONS (ARMY OFFICERS).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that a brigade order was issued in Sialkote during a recent election recommending military officers to vote for a non-Swarajist candidate as the most desirable person before the electors; whether this order has the approval of the Government of India or the commander-in-chief in India; and will he lay upon the Table of the House a copy of this order?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information on this subject, but will make inquiries.

Tuesday, 15th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

ARMY NATIVE LABOUR (ALLOWANCE).

13. Major HORE-BELISHA asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that it is the custom in the British Army in India for the menial work of the various regiments, such as lavatory cleansing, water carrying, etc., to be carried out by native labour, and that the Indian Government make an allowance to pay for suitable native labour to carry out this work in all the depots where

[Major Hore-Belisha.]

British regiments are stationed; that at some of the temporary depots and hospitals where military rank and file are stationed there are no allowances, and the work has to be done by the Royal Army Medical Corps unit, who, if they wish to avoid such work, have to pay from their own mess funds and by subscriptions from the unit for the necessary work to be done; and that there is great feeling among the officers and ranks of the Royal Army Medical Corps in regard to this anomaly; and will he see whether it can be removed?

The **UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards)**: I have been asked to reply. I have no information on this subject and will have inquiries made if the hon. Member will be so kind as to give me the names of the places to which he refers.

ARMY OFFICERS (PAY).

64. **Viscountess ASTOR** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the recent reduction in the pay of British Army officers consists of a 5½ per cent. cut on the 20 per cent. increase granted to meet the higher cost of living, he will reconsider the decision of the India Office to apply the 5½ per cent. reduction to the whole pay of Indian Army officers?

Mr. RICHARDS: The revision of Indian Army rates of pay is still under consideration.

Viscountess ASTOR: Will the hon. Gentleman consider well that Indian officers are among the very poorest of our officers, and that it would be very unfair to charge them on the whole of the pay when this charge is not made to the officers at home?

Mr. RICHARDS: This point has already been brought to the notice of the India Office.

Mr. RAWLINSON: It is a long time ago since we were informed that this question is still under consideration, and can the hon. Gentleman give us the slightest idea as to when any results of his consideration is going to take place, as this is a very serious matter for the Indian officers?

Mr. RICHARDS: In any case the revised rates will date from 1st July.

Major HORE-BELISHA: Is it a fact that no reduction has taken place in Indian Army officers' pay?

Mr. RICHARDS: Nothing has been done as yet.

Thursday, 17th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

WARRANT OFFICERS (FREE PASSAGE).

68. **Rear-Admiral SUETER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the warrant officers, Indian unattached list, are allowed the same free passage facilities when proceeding to this country on leave as other British warrant officers; and, if not, what is the reason?

Mr. PARKINSON (Comptroller of the Household): Non-departmental warrant officers of the Indian unattached list are treated generally under the rules for British Service warrant officers, but owing to the present financial stringency, departmental warrant officers are allowed free entitled passages only when on leave on medical certificate.

DELHI RIOTS.

Viscount CURZON: I desire to put to you, Sir, a question by Private Notice. At this Sitting of the House I received a letter from your Secretary, referring me to Question 67, which the hon. Member was not in his place to ask. I was wondering whether you would allow me to put the question I desire to put by Private Notice?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Noble Lord may ask the question he sent me, but I am informed that the Minister responsible is not able to be here. The Noble Lord can see if there is an answer.

Viscount CURZON: May I ask, in the event of the Under-Secretary being here, whether his attention has been drawn to reports of serious developments of the riots in Delhi, and whether he can make any statement on the position?

Mr. PARKINSON: A report has been asked for, and when it has been received, it will be communicated to the Noble Lord.

ANTHRAX.

25. Mr. TILLET asked the Home Secretary whether he is aware of the hardships and risks to health and life imposed upon workers handling hides, horns, hoofs, bones, wool, and hair, particularly those imported from India and Asia generally; and, in view of the fact that docks, wharves, quays, warehouses, and workshops at which these commodities are handled for transporting and sorting are not scheduled under the Factory Acts, will he take steps to include in the forthcoming legislation such clauses as will cover all those engaged in the handling of these commodities?

Mr. HENDERSON: As the answer to this question is rather long, I will, with my hon. Friend's permission, circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the answer:

I am well aware of the risk from anthrax to which these workers are exposed, and will take every possible step to meet it. There is already power under the Factory Act to make Regulations for the protection of persons employed in docks and the other premises mentioned, and Regulations are in force in regard to the handling of hides imported from Asia or Africa. Experience shows, however, that the most, if not the only, effective remedy consists in the disinfection of the material, and the most hopeful line of advance, therefore, will be to utilise, wherever practicable, the powers conferred by the Anthrax Prevention Act, 1919, by providing for compulsory disinfection at the port of entry. As my hon. Friend knows, certain materials are already being compulsorily disinfected at the Government Station at Liverpool, and the extension of this requirement to other materials, and in particular to East India wool, is now under consideration.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.**DELHI RIOTS.**

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can give any information regarding the Hindu-Mahommedan outbreaks at Delhi and other places in India; and in how many places troops have had to be called out in aid of the civil power?

Mr. RICHARDS: No official telegram has so far been received, but the Government of India have been asked for an early report.

MADRAS HINDU RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS BILL.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India (1) whether, in view of the numerous objections to the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Bill 12 of 1922, the Secretary of State for India will have it examined; and whether he will advise the Governor-General to withhold his assent pending such examination;

(2) whether the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Bill 12 of 1922 was reserved for the consideration of the Governor-General as required by the Rules under the Government of India Act; and, if it was not so reserved, why not;

(3) whether he is aware that the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Bill 12 of 1922 contains provisions contemplating the creation of a select board to be appointed by the Governor acting with the Minister in charge with extensive powers over Hindu religious institutions; and whether the Secretary of State for India was consulted or informed before this departure was made from the principle of non-interference embodied in Section 22 of the Religious Endowment Act XX of 1863?

Mr. RICHARDS: This Measure will in due course, if it is assented to by the Governor-General, come before my Noble Friend under the provisions of Section 82 of the Government of India Act. Until it does so come and he is apprised of all the facts connected with it, he is not prepared to prejudge his own action or that taken by any other authority upon it. The Secretary of State was not consulted about its terms before introduction, and there is no provision of law or rule which required that he should be so consulted.

Monday, 21st July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.**IMPRESSED LABOUR.**

1. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the

[Mr. Baker.]
system of impressed labour for civil or military purposes continues in any part of India; and, if so, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Regulations governing such labour?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to a similar question by the hon. Member for Houghton-le-Spring (Mr. R. Richardson) on the 14th July last.

TRADE UNIONS.

2. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether any legislation is contemplated by the Government of India to enable trade unions to be registered and to protect such bodies from civil or criminal prosecutions when pursuing *bona fide* trade union activities?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to a similar question by the hon. Member for Houghton-le-Spring (Mr. Richardson) on the 14th July last.

52. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what are the terms of the legislation contemplated by the Government of India, according to a large measure of protection from civil and criminal action to registered trade unions in India; and when it is expected that these terms will be brought into force?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India are now about to draft their Bill, which will be published as soon as it is drafted. They hope to be able to introduce it in the Legislative Assembly in the Delhi Session next year.

Sir C. YATE: Does the hon. Gentleman deliberately contemplate making trade unions in India above the law?

Mr. RICHARDS: No.

Mr. W. THORNE: The trade unions want to get the same rights as we have got here.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS.

3. **Mr. BAKER** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether there is any barrier to prevent a fully qualified Indian practising as a consulting engineer in India; and, if not, whether he will in-

quire how it is that, whilst Indian consulting engineers are able to undertake highly important contracts elsewhere, all commissions in India are given to a very limited number of favoured British firms?

Mr. RICHARDS: I know of no such barrier. As regards the second part of the question, if my hon. Friend will give me particulars of any case that has come to his notice an inquiry will be made.

BOMBAY AND BARODA RAILWAY COMPANY (DISCHARGES).

4. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that two workmen employed by the Bombay and Baroda Railway Company have been discharged because they took part in organising a trade union meeting; and will he ask the Government of India to inquire into the matter, with a view to the re-instatement of these men, seeing that trade unions are legal organisations within the Dominion of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The matter does not seem to be one in which the Government of India can interfere, but I understand that one of the workmen referred to has brought an action against the company for wrongful dismissal.

PRISON ADMINISTRATION (PRESS ATTACKS).

5. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the Report on the administration of the gaols in the Punjab for the year 1923, and the remarks of the Governor-in-Council on the attacks in the public Press of India upon the prison administration, which only ceased when the bulk of the Akali prisoners were released and which the Governor-in-Council concluded had been engineered for political reasons and were, when not totally false, at all events greatly exaggerated, and that his sympathies were with the officials who were defamed, and placing on record his satisfaction with the efforts made to maintain prison discipline under the most difficult conditions; whether he will state in how many cases proceedings were taken against the defamers and with what result; and, whether adequate measures will now at last be taken to put a stop to this defamation of officials in the Indian Press and to protect the officials, both

British and Indian, in their endeavours to do their duty?

Mr. RICHARDS: The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. I cannot give figures as to the second part. As regards the last part, I would refer to the answer which I gave to a similar question on the 19th May last.

Sir C. YATE: Is it the case that most of these attacks were made in the paper called the "Bande Mataram," the Editor of which is Lala Lajpat Rai, and of which Har Kishen Lal, a former Minister, is now the chief shareholder?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not aware of that circumstance.

SARDAR MOHINDRASINGH.

9. **Mr. CLARKE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware that Sardar Mohindrasingh, a member of the Punjab Legislative Council, has been sentenced to two and a half years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs.1,500, on a charge of entertaining a Shahidi Akali Jatha; and if he will inquire into the circumstances of the case and the reason for the severity of the sentence?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen a Press message to this effect in a newspaper recently received from India, but have no official information on the subject. Without further details it is not proposed to make inquiry into the case.

Major BARNETT: Will the hon. Gentleman have the goodness to tell the House what is a Shahidi Akali Jatha, as without that information it is impossible to form a judgment on the gravity of this case?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have already said that I have no information beyond what I have seen in the newspapers.

LABOUR CONDITIONS (BOMBAY).

10. **Mr. CLARKE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if, in view of the satisfaction expressed by the people of Bombay with the action of the Secretary of State regarding the payment of wages fortnightly, he is prepared to make it compulsory on employers to pay maternity allowance to women workers, and also to make compulsory the closing of all liquor shops on paydays and holi-

days; and if he will inquire if it is the intention of the government of Bombay to amend the Factory Act in the direction indicated.

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend cannot make maternity benefits or the closing of liquor shops on pay days and holidays compulsory, since legislation in India, as indicated in the last part of my hon. Friend's question, would be required. As regards maternity benefits, the Government of India, not long ago, considered the question of taking action on the lines of the Washington Convention concerning the employment of women before and after childbirth, but decided that, in the circumstances existing in India, this was not feasible. The regulation of liquor shops being a "transferred subject," is not a matter in which my Noble Friend can interfere.

VACCINATION LAWS (HYDERABAD).

11. **Mr. CLARKE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if his attention has been called to the imprisonment of parents in Hyderabad, Sindh, who have conscientious objections to vaccination; and, if so, can he say if it is the intention of the Government of India to amend the Vaccination Act so as to assimilate the law to that prevailing in this country?

Mr. SPEAKER: Is not this a matter relating to an Indian self-governing State?

Mr. RICHARDS: No, Sir. The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. I am not aware that the Government of India contemplate an amendment of the Vaccination Act.

Major BARNETT: Will the Prime Minister consider the desirability of taking steps to assimilate the law of this country with that of India in regard to this matter?

Earl WINTERTON: Does not this question relate to the State of Hyderabad?

Sir HENRY CRAIK: May I ask if any answer was given to the question asked by you, Mr. Speaker, as to the position in that respect?

Mr. SPEAKER: My point was that questions ought not to be asked in the

[Mr. Speaker.]

House relating to the internal affairs of a self-governing Indian State. My knowledge is not sufficient always to be sure about this point, and that is the reason why I asked the question.

Sir H. CRAIK: No answer was made to the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Under-Secretary of State for India said "No."

GERMAN SUBJECTS (EXCLUSION).

12. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the feeling that has been aroused in India against the readmission of German missionaries consequent on their conduct in the late War; and will he take steps to prevent the removal of the present ban on their return to India?

Mr. RICHARDS: No change is at present contemplated in the Government of India's policy of general exclusion of Germans, including missionaries, from India for five years from the official date of the termination of the War. The prohibition may be relaxed in the case of individual missionaries under very stringent safeguards, including a condition that the head of the mission in India in which such missionary would work must be a British subject.

Sir C. YATE: Considering what was done by these German missionaries during the War and the present state of India, does not the hon. Gentleman think it would be most unsatisfactory and unjustifiable to re-admit them?

Mr. RICHARDS: I think that point is safeguarded in the terms of the reply.

Major Sir BERTRAM FALLE: Does the hon. Gentleman remember that the German missionary who was found in the Cameroons working for his country said he was a German first and a missionary afterwards?

OPIUM AND ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS.

47. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will state the amount of revenue received by the Indian Government from the sale of opium and alcoholic liquors in British

India for the past 10 years; and whether the representatives of the Indian people, through the Legislative Assembly, will be allowed to send representatives to the Opium Conference which is shortly to be held under the auspices of the League of Nations?

Mr. RICHARDS: The figures are being prepared and I will circulate them in the OFFICIAL REPORT as soon as possible. India will be represented at the two Conferences on opium smoking and the manufacture of drugs to be held this autumn. In selecting representatives my Noble Friend will follow the procedure adopted in the case of the Indian delegation at the assembly of the League of Nations.

PUNJAB (UNREST).

48. **Mr. RHYS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the serious state of unrest and discontent among the Sikhs in the Punjab; and, if so, to what cause does he attribute it?

Mr. RICHARDS: The situation as regards certain sections of the Sikhs in the Punjab has long been under the serious consideration of the Indian authorities and my Noble Friend. I fear that it would not be possible to explain the causes to which unrest or discontent is due within the limits of an answer to the question.

Mr. RHYS: Has not the unrest been considerably accentuated by the attitude of the Secretary of State on communal representation as expressed in his letter?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is a matter of opinion.

DELHI (RIOTS).

49. **Mr. RHYS** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can give any information as to the recent rioting in Delhi; the cause of the outbreak; and the number of casualties?

14. **Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any information with regard to the Hindu-Moslem riots in Delhi; and whether he will call for an official report?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will answer these questions by circulating in the OFFICIAL REPORT copies of two telegrams from the Government of India on the subject of the Delhi riots.

Earl WINTERTON: Can the hon. Gentleman not give some information on this, which is really a very important matter? Can he say whether or not the rioting has now ceased, and how many British troops have been engaged in quelling it?

Mr. RICHARDS: I can say the rioting has now ceased, but I cannot say how many British troops were engaged. I understand two persons were injured.

Earl WINTERTON: Cannot the hon. Gentleman give the number of British troops engaged in quelling the dispute, instead of quoting telegrams from the Government of India?

Mr. RICHARDS: If the Noble Lord will wait until he has seen the answer, I think he will agree that it meets the case.

Following are the copies of the telegrams:

"COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY, HOME DEPARTMENT, TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, DATED 18TH JULY, 1924.

Following telegram received from Chief Commissioner: Communal tension between Hindus and Musalmans has been greatly accentuated lately by several rumours of forcible conversion to either faith. Special arrangements made for protection of the city during 1d with the aid of the military. On the 11th, 3 days before 1d, insignificant unexpected quarrel between Hindu and Musalman youths occasioned slight riot in the morning, easily suppressed, followed by serious Musalman attack due to false rumour of death of this youth. Situation promptly dealt with by police, but military assistance invoked. Situation under control by night. Hospital casualties: Hindus, dead, 3; injured, 45. Moslems, injured, 25. Unknown number under treatment elsewhere. No trouble 12th to 14th. Local authorities morning of the 15th proclaimed special closing of additional route through Hindu quarter for cows destined for sacrifice. Orders resented by the Moslems, especially butchers. Serious riots at midday in the northern suburbs of the city. Proclamation with difficulty enforced. Order restored within two hours with military assistance. Hospital casualties: Hindus, dead, 8; injured, 44. Moslems, dead, 1; injured, 25; unknown number privately treated. Police opened fire with buckshot, causing two deaths. No trouble 16th. Following night riot by Hindus centre of city easily

suppressed. To-day situation quiet, Moslem shops generally open, Hindu shops mostly closed. Police control adequate with military assistance. There has been no looting. Situation grave owing to the unreasonable panic and possibility of individual acts of *badmashi*."

"COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY, HOME DEPARTMENT, TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, DATED 17TH JULY, 1924.

Acute tension between Hindus and Mohammedans, Delhi, has been prevalent for some time, resulting in somewhat serious disturbances. Alleged assault by Hindus on Mohammedan boy, and false rumour that boy was killed, created much excitement in Mohammedan community. Military was called in and situation was under control by nightfall. Dispositions created by local authority were sufficient to prevent disturbances on the following three days, and critical day, 14th July, of Mohammedan Festival passed off quietly. At midday on 15th July, however, serious trouble began in Sudder Bazaar. Local regulations prohibit taking cows for slaughter in Delhi during 1d by certain routes leading through the Hindu quarters. Dispute arose whether a cow should be taken along prohibited route. Riots ensued and police were compelled to fire. Order was restored by about 4 p.m. by the assistance of the military. Three Hindus and one Mohammedan are believed to have been killed. Latest reports state that the situation is satisfactory."

BIRTH- AND DEATH-RATES (CHILDREN).

53. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the number of births in British India during the past 10 years ending 30th June; and the number of deaths of children under one, five and 10 years of age for the same period?

Mr. RICHARDS: As the reply takes the form of a statistical table, I propose, with my hon. Friend's permission, to circulate it in the OFFICIAL REPORT.

Following is the reply:

Number of registered births in British India:

Year.	Number.
1914	9,447,300
1915	9,021,825
1916	8,856,283
1917	9,379,349
1918	8,430,560
1919	7,212,415
1920	7,864,232
1921	7,322,639
1922	7,535,956
1923	7,909,097

Number of deaths of children.

Year.	Under 1.	Under 5.	Under 10.
1914 ...	2,001,988	1,264,006	422,403
1915 ...	1,821,732	1,132,395	442,878
1916 ...	1,793,784	1,196,972	423,761
1917 ...	1,929,491	1,365,463	512,991
1918 ...	2,252,034	2,052,979	1,037,796
1919 ...	1,618,799	1,351,729	625,735
1920 ...	1,532,990	1,148,567	498,157
1921 } *	—	—	—
1922 }	—	—	—
1923 }	—	—	—

* No figures for this period are available.

ARTILLERY OFFICERS (HOUSING).

50. **Lieut.-Colonel JAMES** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that there is a house shortage at Rawal Pindi and insufficient Government bungalows to accommodate married officers of the Artillery; that the rent of bungalows amounts to from 90 to 175 rupees a month, and that hotel accommodation is 500 rupees a month for two people; and whether, seeing that this makes a severe inroad on the pay of a junior officer, and in view of the fact that infantry officers receiving similar pay can obtain Government bungalows, he will take prompt action in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I will have the Government of India's attention called to the matter which the hon. and gallant Member mentions.

CAWNPORE (SEDITION TRIAL).

58. **Earl WINTERTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will publish as a White Paper an account of the proceedings and finding in the Cawnpore conspiracy case?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India have recently reported that a complete record of the case is being printed for the hearing of the appeal which is expected to be filed in the High Court, and that copies will be forwarded as soon as possible. I can therefore only refer to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member for Bow and Bromley on the 22nd June.

Earl WINTERTON: Do I understand from the reply that the hon. Gentleman has definitely decided not to publish these papers, if and when they are received?

Mr. RICHARDS: No; the reply I gave was that it was a matter within the discretion of the Secretary of State.

Earl WINTERTON: Some hon. Gentlemen opposite feel, like myself, that we ought to have this information which is of great importance. Why, in view of the fact that the hon. Gentleman has been pressed by hon. Members, cannot he now undertake to publish it as soon as it is received from the Government of India? What reason is there against that?

Mr. RICHARDS: The reason is that the Secretary of State has probably not yet received it himself.

Mr. LANSBURY: If it has been published in India, what reason is there for not publishing it here?

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL.

Mr. WILLIAM NICHOLSON reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Mr. Alden to act as Chairman of Standing Committee D (in respect of the Government of India (Leave of Absence) Bill) [*Lords*].

Report to lie upon the Table.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

TATA IRON AND STEEL WORKS, JAMSHEDPUR.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Indian employes of the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur are not granted any rest days, although the Factory Act makes it compulsory for one day's rest in 10 to be given; and what steps are being taken by the Government of India to enforce the law?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. The Indian law provides for a weekly rest day on Sunday or a substituted day, provided that the substitution in no case results in more than 10 consecutive days. My Noble Friend has no reason to suppose that the Provincial Government, which is responsible for the

administration of the Factory Act, has failed to enforce its provisions.

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, BENGAL.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he will give the names of the gentlemen appointed by the Government of Bengal in the Commerce Department as a panel for the conciliation of all labour disputes in industrial and manufacturing organisations; which of these gentlemen are representative of labour; and what steps were taken to consult labour organisations as to the personnel of the labour side of the panel?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information, but I understand that following an inquiry held by the Government of Bengal as to the best method of settling industrial disputes a panel of the kind referred to was appointed.

TRADE UNIONS.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India propose to introduce an amendment to the Trade Union Act, whereby any person not engaged in the particular industry will not be allowed to take part in the organisation and administration of trade unionists; and whether, in view of the fact that large numbers of Indian workers are illiterate, he will make representations to the Government of India to withdraw this proposal, so that the Indian workers may have the assistance of better educated persons in organising their unions, as the British workers had half-a-century ago?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. There is at present no Trade Union Act in India, but the Government of India contemplate introducing legislation next year for the registration and protection of trade unions. A copy of the draft Bill is expected shortly, and will be placed in the library when it arrives.

ANTHRAX.

Mr. TILLET asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the conditions of labour enforced in India upon workers handling, sorting and transporting hides, horns, hoofs, bones, wool and hair, and what regulations are imposed to prevent the contagion of anthrax from reaching such commodities; and can he indicate the

hours of employment and system of labour operating amongst those engaged in handling these commodities?

Mr. RICHARDS: Workers in India employed in factories, including wool mills, are subject to the provisions of the Factories Act, a copy of which I shall be happy to supply to my hon. Friend. A provision was added to the Act in 1922 enabling the Governor-General in Council to make rules for the disinfection of wool used in factories which may be infected with anthrax spores. So far as I am aware no rules have been framed probably because anthrax is an exceedingly rare industrial disease in India.

MARRIED OFFICERS (PAY).

Sir J. NALL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what steps are being taken to make adequate the pay and allowances of English officers serving in India; and whether he is aware of the present inadequacy, especially in the case of married officers without private means?

Mr. RICHARDS: The position of married officers is receiving special attention in connection with the revision of pay which is now under consideration.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS (WAGES).

Sir J. NALL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether a Fair Wages Clause is inserted in all contracts placed for the Government of India; and, if so, if it is enforced in the case of glass globes for Pintsch lamps?

Mr. RICHARDS: As a general rule the Fair Wages Clause is inserted in contracts placed by the High Commissioner for India. The question of enforcing that Clause in the case of glass globes for Pintsch lamps has not yet arisen. The last order was placed in December, 1922.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT (MARRIAGE ALLOWANCE).

Mr. SIMPSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that during the War officials of the Indian Medical Department drew separation and other kindred allowances and that under Royal Warrant, A.O. 357, dated 28th August, 1920, marriage allowance was substituted for those allowances, he will say whether members of the Indian

Medical Department now draw marriage allowance; and, if not, for what reason that allowance is withheld from them?

Mr. RICHARDS: Marriage allowance was granted in India to personnel of the British Service and to certain other ranks drawn from the British Service and serving under the same general conditions of pay. It was not considered necessary to extend the allowance to the Indian Medical Department, the personnel of which, with few exceptions, are domiciled in India. They were allowed to draw separation allowance on account of special wartime conditions.

CONSTITUTION.

Mr. MACKINDER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if the Resolution of the Legislative Assembly of September, 1921, to the effect that the progress made by India on the path of responsible government warrant a re-examination and revision of the constitution at an earlier date than 1929, and supported by the Government of India, was transmitted to the Secretary of State; whether this is still the view of the Government of India; and, if not, whether he can give the reason for the change?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Resolution was transmitted to the Secretary of State and was answered by my Noble Friend's predecessor in a published Despatch. The Government of India did not express the view which my hon. Friend attributes to them; the last two parts of his question do not therefore arise.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS (DELEGATION).

Mr. MACKINDER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the assurance given by Sir Mian Muhammad Shafi, legal member of the Council of the Governor-General of India, on 10th March, 1924, that the proposal that an Indian of suitable rank and qualifications to be leader of the delegation representative of India at the Assembly of the League of Nations would receive the most careful consideration of the Government of India when the time for appointment comes; whether this consideration has been given; and what are the reasons why an Indian has not been appointed?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affir-

mative. After the most careful consideration my Noble Friend, in agreement with the Government of India, decided to appoint Lord Hardinge as leader of the Indian delegation.

RIOTS, DELHI AND NAGPUR CITY.

Mr. SIMPSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India from how many places religious rioting has been reported; in how many cases it was found necessary to use firearms to quell the riots; how many casualties have been reported among police, Hindus, and Mohammedans, respectively; and whether the religious animosity which gave rise to the riots has now died down?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am circulating in the OFFICIAL REPORT in reply to two other questions, two telegrams from the Government of India regarding Hindu-Moslem riots at Delhi on the 11th and 15th. I will also circulate in reply to this question a copy of two further telegrams from the Government of India of the 17th and 18th July, which refer also to a riot in Nagpur City.

"COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY, HOME DEPARTMENT, TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, DATED 17TH JULY, 1924.

Following has been received from the Central Provinces Government:— *Begins.* 'Trouble again arose in Nagpur City in connection with the Hindu procession past the Mosque on 12th July and 13th July. Several isolated assaults and stone-throwing took place, and number of persons admitted to hospital on 13th, of whom two seriously injured. Police have the situation well in hand and no serious trouble anticipated. District Magistrate has issued orders under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, prohibiting the carrying of sticks in public places. *Ends.* No serious disturbances have been reported at any other place. We shall furnish any additional information that may be received by 20th July.'

"COPY OF TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY, HOME DEPARTMENT, TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, DATED 19TH JULY, 1924.

Bakrid disturbances. Details regarding Delhi Nagpur already communicated. No disturbances reported elsewhere nor were troops employed to assist the civil power in dealing with rioters."

COURT-MARTIAL, KARACHI.

Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to make a statement with regard to the court-martial held at

Karachi, with regard to which he promised on the 7th July to seek information?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Government of India's report has not yet been received.

MILITARY TRAINING COLLEGE (INDIANS).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether there are any military colleges and training schools in India where Indians are allowed to join and study on terms of equality with students from Britain; and the number of such colleges and schools and the number of Indians on the books?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is only one military training college in India, namely, the Prince of Wales' Indian Military College, Dehra Dun. Only Indian students are admitted, and at present there are only 70. I venture to hope that my hon. Friend, with his well-known love for the military life, will encourage his Indian friends to send their sons to this admirable institution. All officers of the Army, whether British or Indian, enjoy equal rights and facilities at officers' training colleges and courses.

INDUSTRIES.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State will consider the appointment of an investigation committee, composed of British and Indian employers of labour and representatives of British and Indian labour, to inquire into the rates of wages, cost of production and profits of Indian industries as compared with British industries of a similar character?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend is not prepared to appoint a committee of this kind.

PRICES AND WAGES.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the wages paid to postmen, policemen, railway men, telegraph men, clerks and office peons, respectively, in the cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Allahabad and Madras; and the amount necessary for the maintenance of a working-class family in these towns?

Mr. RICHARDS: The exact particulars specified in the question are not available,

but I am sending my hon. Friend a copy of "Prices and Wages in India" and of Mr. Findlay Shirras's "Report on an Enquiry into Working Class Budgets in Bombay," which contain a quantity of information more or less approximating to what he asked for. In using "Prices and Wages in India" it should be noticed that the latest year for which figures are given is never later than 1922, and in some tables considerably earlier.

FRANCHISE.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Committee in India, which is inquiring into the working of the Government of India Act, will have power to inquire as to the effect of the limitation of the franchise, and to make recommendations whereby the working and depressed classes may obtain direct representation in the Legislative Assembly and on the Provincial Councils?

Mr. RICHARDS: I do not think the terms of reference to the Committee would debar them from inquiring into the present franchise, but I doubt whether they would cover recommendations in the sense suggested in the question.

Fiji (DEPUTATION).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can explain the delay in the publication of the Report of the Indian Deputation to Fiji?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer the hon. Member to the reply to a question of the hon. Member for Mile End (Mr. Scurr) on 7th July on the same subject.

BRITISH AND INDIAN TROOPS.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the total number of British troops at present serving in India and the total number of Indian troops serving in British India; and will he give the comparative figures for the years 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917 and 1918, together with the total number of Indians serving as officers with the British and Indian Armies in India?

Mr. RICHARDS: The following statement shows the comparative strength of

British and Indian troops in India on the dates indicated, and the number of Indians holding Viceroy's commissions and King's commissions:

	1912 (1st Jan.).	1913 (1st Jan.).	1914 (1st Jan.).	1924 (1st May).
British other ranks	71,549	70,084	71,327	55,540
Indian other ranks	151,557*	150,036*	150,168*	127,896
Indians with Viceroy's Commissions ...				3,167
Indians with King's Commissions ...	—	—	—	67

* Separate figures are not given in the returns for these years.

During the period of the War, and for some time after, the numbers of British and Indian troops were in a constant state of flux, and it is, therefore, impossible to give even approximately accurate figures for these years.

INDIAN CHURCH MEASURE.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any information with regard to the present position of the proposed legislation to give autonomy to the Church of England in India; and whether, before anything is decided, the Measure will be submitted for examination to a Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament in order to see that the essential rights of English Protestants resident in India are properly safeguarded?

Mr. RICHARDS: The draft of the Indian Church Measure is under consideration by Government, and the authorities of the Church of England in India. It is not expected that it will be ready to be proceeded with this year. Until it has been received in its final form, I am unable to say what procedure will be adopted in dealing with it.

Wednesday, 23rd July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MR. DAS.

12. **Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY** asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Mr. Das has applied for a passport to come to this country; whether a passport has been granted;

and whether his proposed visit is on official business?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I have been asked to answer this question. I have no official information on the subject.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether the Secretary of State for India has not written another letter on this subject, or was this proposed visit due to the telegram from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster the other day to Mr. Das, in which he said that the present time was a very suitable time from the Swarajist point of view for Mr. Das to come over?

Mr. RICHARDS: As I have said, I have no information.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

STANDING COMMITTEE D.

Mr. WILLIAM NICHOLSON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee D: Mr. Richards.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Thursday, 24th July, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

REGISTERED BODIES (ACCOUNTANTS).

Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that since 1913 it has become increasingly difficult for qualified members of the Corporation of Accountants, Glasgow, the London Association of

Accountants, and Central Association of Accountants, London, to act as auditors of registered companies in India because the Government insists that, in addition to passing the examination, candidates for licences must become apprentices to one of the few practising accountants chosen by the Government; and whether he will make representations to the Government of India with a view to the removal of this stipulation?

Mr. RICHARDS: My noble Friend is aware that members of the three bodies mentioned are not allowed to act as auditors of registered bodies in India without a certificate given by a local Government after the production of evidence of at least five years' adequate practical experience. The matter is not one in which my noble Friend is prepared to interfere with the discretion of the Government of India.

ARMY OFFICERS' PENSIONS.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in issuing India Office Circular M. 3919/24, informing officers of the Indian Army that, pending a decision, their pensions will be reduced as from 1st July by approximately 5 per cent., but that the reduc-

tion finally decided on will not exceed 5½ per cent., consideration has been given to the fact that this represents a deduction of 40 per cent. on the variable 20 per cent. of the Indian Army officers' pensions as compared with the deduction of 27½ per cent. on the variable amount of British service officers' pensions?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer the hon. and gallant Member to my reply of 7th July. The provisional reductions are subject to later adjustment.

OPIMUM AND ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS.

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will state the amount of revenue received by the Indian Government from the sale of opium and alcoholic liquors in British India for the past ten years; and whether the representatives of the Indian people, through the Legislative Assembly, will be allowed to send representatives to the Opium Conference which is shortly to be held under the auspices of the League of Nations?

Mr. RICHARDS: Pursuant to his answer [OFFICIAL REPORT, 21st July, 1924; col. 843, Vol. 176], supplied the following figures:

	1913-1914.	1914-1915.	1915-1916.	1916-1917.	1917-1918.	1918-1919.	1919-1920.	1920-1921.	1921-1922.	1922-1923.	Total.
	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.	Lakhs of Rs.
Opium Revenue...	243.7	235.8	227.0	474.0	461.8	493.4	455.6	353.4	307.3	379.0	3691.0
Excise Revenue on Spirits and Drugs (gross).	1334.2	1328.5	1294.8	1382.4	1524.3	1733.6	1925.9	2043.7	1730.1	1670.2	16167.7
Customs Revenue on liquors (gross).	133.7	121.7	117.9	125.1	109.9	110.7	138.0	188.0	212.8	231.5	1489.3
	1711.6	1686.0	1699.7	1981.5	2096.0	2337.7	2519.5	2585.1	2250.2	2480.7	21348.0

The figures given above are for British India. Part of the sale proceeds of ~~Excise opium~~ are included under Opium Revenue at fixed prices, representing cost price, and the balance, representing gain, under Excise Revenue. Excise Revenue figures are given for spirits and drugs, including opium.

ROYAL INDIAN MARINE.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, con-

sidering that the Indian Mercantile Marine Committee has now reported in favour of the early reorganisation of the Royal Indian Marine as a combatant Indian Navy, he can now state when orders will be issued on the subject?

Mr. RICHARDS: I regret that I am unable to add to what I have said on previous occasions on this subject

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL [*Lords*].

As amended (*in the Standing Committee*), considered.

CLAUSE 1.—(*Amendment of Section 86 and 87 of the Government of India Act.*)

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I beg to move, in page 2, line 28, to leave out the words "except where in the case of a person granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest."

and to insert, instead thereof, the word "unless."

Sub-section (5) will then read:

"if he does not resume his duties upon the termination of the period of the leave, he shall, unless the Secretary of State in Council otherwise directs, repay, in such manner as may be so prescribed as aforesaid, any leave-allowances received under this Sub-section."

I move this Amendment in deference to the general wish of the Committee upstairs, that the right of the Secretary of State to waive repayments should be extended, not only to those individuals who may be called home for urgent reasons of public interest, but also to individuals who may come home because of illness, and fail to return at the end of the period for the same reason.

Earl WINTERTON: I am not quite sure that I agree with the Amendment. I am sorry the hon. Gentleman did not explain a little more clearly the whole Clause before moving the Amendment. There was a considerable change, as I understand, made in this Clause by the Committee. Originally, there was no distinction drawn in the Clause between a high official who came home on matters of public interest, and one who came home for reasons of health and private affairs. The Committee inserted two Amendments in the Clause, one of which is to be found in Sub-section (4), where a distinction is made between the official who comes home on public business, and the official who comes home on private business, by granting to the official who comes home on public business certain advantages that the official who comes home on private business, or for reasons of health, does not enjoy. The other distinction was made in this Sub-section (5), which is the subject of the Amendment now before the House. The

Committee left the Clause as it originally stood in the case of the official who came home for reasons of health or private affairs, so that he could not in any case obtain repayment of his leave-allowances if he, at the end of his period of leave, did not return to India. I think I am correct in saying that.

Mr. RICHARDS: I think the Noble Lord is somewhat under a misapprehension. As the Bill was originally drafted in the House of Lords, I believe there was no proposal for repayment at all. Then there was a proposal that there should be a provision in the Bill for repayment, except in the case of an individual called home for urgent reasons of public interest. It was felt rather a hardship if a public official in India—either the Viceroy or the Commander-in-Chief, who were the two persons concerned—was called home on a matter of urgent public interest, and was unable, for reasons of health, to return at the end of the period—four months—that he should be asked to repay the allowances paid during the period he was here. The views of the Committee, which were expressed very strongly by Members on both sides, was that that same hardship might occur in the case of an individual who came home for reasons of health, and was unable to return for the same reasons, and the view of the Committee was that the Secretary of State should exempt that individual as well from making repayment of the allowances.

Earl WINTERTON: Unless he otherwise direct.

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

Earl WINTERTON: I was quite familiar with the change made. I apologise if I put my point clumsily. They drew a distinction in this Sub-section, as in the previous Sub-section, between the official who came home for reasons of health and private affairs, and the official who came home on public affairs. What I understand the hon. Gentleman now seeks to do—I do not understand why this Amendment was not put on the Order Paper in the ordinary way; it is usual, when the Minister has decided to move an Amendment, to put it on the Order Paper—what the hon. Gentleman now seeks to do is to extend the advantage, which the Committee had

already given to those officials who come home on questions of public interest, to those who come home for private reasons. On that point there is no difference of opinion between us, but I wish to make a further point in connection with the same matter. In the first place, I do not know why the hon. Gentleman ever laid down in the Clause that these officials should be required to repay these leave-allowances. I should have thought it was not necessary. If he assures me that, in the interests of good administration, it is necessary, I say nothing further on that point, but when he made the distinction between the two sets of officials, he qualified that distinction very materially by inserting the words

“he shall, except where in the case of a person granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest, the Secretary of State in Council otherwise directs.”

In other words, the Secretary of State in Council is the deciding authority as to whether this official shall or shall not have to repay his leave-allowances, and in extending the Amendment so as to provide for the other type of official, he equally leaves it to the Secretary of State to decide whether or not the repayment shall be allowed. While I think, in the case of an officer or an official who is in England for reasons of health or private affairs, that, perhaps, on the whole it is better that the Secretary of State should be the deciding authority as to whether or not this official is to repay his allowances, I must say I think in the case of an officer or official who is home on public affairs, it is a mistake to give to the Minister the right of deciding whether or not that officer or official shall have to repay his leave-allowances. I will give my reasons. The Under-Secretary may feel that they are not strong reasons, because the circumstances are not likely to arise. But, say the Commander-in-Chief or the Viceroy in India comes home to England, summoned by the Secretary of State, to discuss some great question of policy on which he and the Secretary of State do not see eye to eye. After prolonged discussion, it may be the Secretary of State decides he cannot alter his view, and is still against the view of the Commander-in-Chief or Viceroy. The Commander-in-Chief or Viceroy says, “I am no longer able to go on; I must resign.” Then the

onus would rest—and it would be rather an invidious responsibility—upon the Secretary of State in Council to decide whether or not in this case the leave-allowances should be repaid by the official in question. It is a responsibility which should not be put upon the Secretary of State in Council. I admit I hardly can see it would often arise, but there might be the case of serious dispute where the Secretary of State believed the Viceroy or Commander-in-Chief had not carried out his duties as he should have done, that the Secretary of State in Council might have a very unpleasant decision to take, and I should have thought it was far better to say in a case of an official home on duty, he should not in any case have to repay these allowances, but if home on private affairs, or for reasons of health, it should rest with the Secretary of State to decide whether the allowances should be paid.

It being Quarter-past Eight of the Clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL [*Lords*].

Postponed Proceeding resumed on Amendment proposed on Consideration of Bill, as amended (*in the Standing Committee*).

Question again proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill.”

Mr. BANKS: I should like to associate myself with the criticisms which have been made by the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham (Earl Winterton). As the Clause stands, it has this effect, that where a man comes home upon leave in connection with his health or private affairs he must, if he does not return to India, repay his allowance, whereas in the case of a servant who comes over in the public interest he may be relieved of the liability to repay his leave-allowances at the discretion of the Secretary of State. If I have rightly followed the

[Mr. Banks.]

Amendment, the effect in future will be that the person who comes over on private affairs or leave may likewise be relieved at the discretion of the Secretary of State. I am very glad that that discretion is given in connection with an Indian servant who comes over here on matters of health or private affairs, because I can conceive many circumstances in which it would be only proper that this concession should be made.

I feel very strongly that the Viceroy or the Commander-in-Chief coming home from India on leave stand upon a different footing from anybody who for whatever reason are over here in regard to private affairs. That distinction is properly drawn in the preceding Clause because it recognises that, whereas the person who comes over on private affairs has his office vacated from the beginning of his leave, in the case of a person coming over in the interest of the State his office is not so determined. These two classes stand upon a different footing. The Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief, if he comes over on urgent business of public importance is summoned, and he is bound to come and it is one of the duties of his office to answer the call. Therefore he should not be exposed to any risk at all in the matter.

In the case of a person not coming over in the public interest the Secretary of State should have the discretion to put the matter right, but when the Commander-in-Chief or any of the higher officials in India come over it is inconceivable that they should come here except on business of a very important character, and they should feel that their leave allowances are secured to them as a matter of right. The hypothetical case which was put by the Noble Lord is one which might very well occur in the present state of India. Great events will have to be discussed there before very long which may necessitate a visit from some of these high officials in India, and it would be very mean and shabby that this country should bring over either of these two great officials on important public business and not allow them to feel that they are entitled to their leave allowances as a matter of right.

Earl WINTERTON: Are we going to have any reply to these criticisms?

Mr. RICHARDS: With regard to the point made by the Noble Lord as to the possibility of a conflict between the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State, I quite appreciate the possibility of that taking place, but I think the matter is safely left in the discretion of the Secretary of State in Council. This Bill has been very carefully debated in another place by a number of those who have had actual experience of the present procedure. It has been debated there at very great length, and the suggestion made was that the matter should be left to the discretion of the Secretary of State in Council.

Earl WINTERTON: I do not quite follow what the hon. Gentleman has said as to what took place in another place. There was no reference at all to the Secretary of State when the Bill left another place.

Mr. RICHARDS: There was a reference to this question of the discretion of the Secretary of State.

Earl WINTERTON: May I point out that Sub-section (5) of Clause 1 provides that

"Where a person obtains leave of absence in pursuance of this Section he shall be entitled to receive during his absence such leave-allowances as may be prescribed by rules made by the Secretary of State in Council, but, if he does not resume his duties upon the termination of the period of the leave, he shall, except where in the case of a person granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest the Secretary of State in Council otherwise directs, repay, in such manner as may be so prescribed as aforesaid, any leave-allowances received under this Sub-section."

This proviso was put in by the Committee upstairs.

Mr. BANKS: That must have been so, because in the Bill as it left another place there was no distinction drawn between public and private interests.

Mr. RICHARDS: The words of the Amendment are

"except where in the case of a person granted leave for urgent reasons of public interest."

That Amendment was inserted upstairs. The argument upstairs, which I have tried to meet in the new Amendment, was that that discretion should be extended to all three classes. I know it is difficult to draw a distinction between

a man who is brought home on business and a man who comes home for reasons of health and is unable to return. We also find that it is difficult to draw a distinction between a man who comes home on account of his health and a man who falls ill while he is at home.

Mr. BANKS: The hon. Gentleman has not quite answered my objection, which is that, while I quite agree with and welcome the further concession which he has made, he still leaves it discretionary in the case of the servant who comes over in the public interest. In the view of the Noble Lord and myself, he should be on a different footing, and should be entitled to his allowances whatever happens. I do not think the hon. Gentleman addressed himself to that point.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the Third time."

Earl WINTERTON: I am very glad that the Government are putting this Bill into operation, but I should like to say again, if I may, that I trust that in future, when Amendments are introduced in Bills of this character, which are more or less agreed Bills, due notice will be given. What has happened on the Report stage of this Bill is very inconvenient.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the Third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Monday, 28th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

CURRENCY.

1. **Sir FREDRIC WISE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he has received a communication from the Bengal Chamber of Commerce on the currency situation; and, if so, what does he propose doing in the matter?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): No, Sir. The communication to which the hon. Member refers has, I understand from the Press, been addressed to the Government of

India, who are doubtless giving it careful consideration. It is scarcely necessary for me to add that my Noble Friend is in constant communication with the Government of India on the important questions which constantly arise in connection with Indian currency and exchange.

RIOTS IN DELHI.

2. **Earl WINTERTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if normal conditions of public order have now been restored in Delhi; if British troops have been relieved from street duty; and what was the total number of such troops on such duty during the riots?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first two parts of the question is in the affirmative. The Chief Commissioner reports that troops were intermittently employed from the 11th to the 17th July. The maximum number employed was 75 British infantry, with six armoured cars, and 100 Indian cavalry. The troops did not fire.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Have these disturbances ceased all over India, or are they still continuing in other parts?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no recent information which leads me to believe that disturbances are going on elsewhere.

3. **Earl WINTERTON** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India how many persons were killed and injured in the recent disturbances in Delhi; and how many of such casualties were attributable to clashes between the rival Hindu and Mohammedan mobs and how many to action by the police and military?

Mr. RICHARDS: 16 Hindus and one Mohammedan were killed. 96 Hindus, 50 Mohammedans and four police were injured. These figures do not include casualties treated privately. No casualties are reported to have been caused by the troops, who did not fire. As stated last week, two persons were killed by the police, who opened fire with buckshot.

Earl WINTERTON: Are we to understand from the hon. Gentleman's answer that the vast majority of the casualties are caused by the clash between rival parties, and not by the police or military bodies?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is so. Only two were caused by the police.

Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE: In what other places have similar disturbances occurred?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have just said that I have no recent information.

ARMY HOSPITALS.

4. Lieut. - Colonel Sir PHILIP RICHARDSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what steps, if any, have been taken to secure an immediate and general improvement in the whole standard, comfort, and accommodation in the hospitals for British troops in India as the result of the investigations of the British Station Hospital Committee, under the chairmanship of Surgeon-General Sir G. H. Makins, in 1918; whether any Report hereon has been issued; and, if so, whether it may be placed in the Library?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not received any report from India, but am having a statement prepared from the information in my possession, and will let the hon. Member have a copy as soon as possible.

SIRAJGANJ RESOLUTION.

6. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has anything to add with regard to the Sirajganj resolution passed by the Swarajist party; and whether the Government adhere to their policy with regard to this matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. To the second part, I can only reply that no policy in regard to this matter has been advocated by the Government of India, by whose recommendations my noble Friend is content to be guided.

Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY: Does the glorification and laborious eulogy of Mr. Das as being a saintly person denote a change of policy on the part of His Majesty's Government, and is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Secretary of State's recent utterance has made not only him but Mr. Das an object of ridicule throughout India?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no indication of a change of policy on the part of the Government.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION.

8. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, now that the Viceroy has called a conference of the provincial governors at Simla at the end of this month to discuss the administration of the various Provinces, the question of the advisability of suspending the Legislative Assembly and all provincial councils, and not only the Central Provinces Council, will be discussed as well as the proposals contained in paragraph 245 of the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms for the subdivision of existing provinces into smaller areas on a linguistic or racial basis?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no knowledge of any general conference for the purposes indicated. The Government of India Act does not provide for the suspension of Legislatures. As regards the subdivision of Provinces, I invite the hon. and gallant Member's attention to my answer to his question of the 30th June.

Sir C. YATE: In the first place, has not the Central Provinces Council been suspended, and, in the second place, does not the hon. Gentleman consider that provinces of 30, 40 and 50 million people are too large for effective administration?

Mr. RICHARDS: Again I should like to draw the hon. Baronet's attention to the discussion of this matter in the Report.

Sir C. YATE: What about the suspension of the Central Provinces Council?

MURDER OF MR. WHITTEN, ASSAM.

9. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can now give the particulars regarding the murder of Mr. Whitten by coolies on a tea estate in Assam; whether he is aware that this murder was the result of the preaching of agitators; and how much longer the Government responsible for law and order is going to tolerate this preaching?

Mr. RICHARDS: The further Report promised, after investigation, has not yet been received.

Sir C. YATE: Was not this murder the result of the preaching of agitation, and how long are the Government of India going to tolerate this agitation?

Mr. RICHARDS: We have asked for a Report.

Earl WINTERTON: Has the hon. Gentleman asked for a statement from the local Governor as to the state of public order?

Mr. RICHARDS: We have asked for a Report of the whole affair.

Mr. J. JONES: Are all the agitators going to be sent to the scaffold at the request of hon. Members opposite?

O'DWYER v. NAIR.

19. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Prime Minister whether he will grant time for the discussion of the Motion standing in the name of the hon. Member for Melton, or what action he proposes to take in this matter?—[*“To call attention to the facts brought out in the trial of the libel action brought by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, against Sir Sankaran Nair, formerly a member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, in the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice, that in consequence of the defence having accused Sir Michael O'Dwyer of the commission of serious atrocities, including General Dyer's shooting on the mob at Amritsar on 13th April, 1919, and having insisted that this was relevant to the defence, the Judge was compelled to advise the jury as to whether the shooting in question constituted an atrocity, and, if so, whether Sir Michael O'Dwyer was responsible for it; that after considering all the evidence on the subject, much of which was not before His Majesty's Government when they punished General Dyer in 1920, the Judge expressed the view that 'General Dyer, in the grave and exceptional circumstances, acted rightly, and in my opinion upon the evidence he was wrongly punished by the Secretary of State for India'; and, considering that this view was accepted by 11 out of the 12 jurymen, an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying that this judicial opinion and finding, based upon a full consideration of all the evidence, be accepted, and that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to revoke the censure passed upon General Dyer after the incomplete executive investigation in 1920.”*]

The PRIME MINISTER: No, Sir; I am not prepared to grant time for the discussion of this Motion.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

DEPUTY PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSIONER, SIMLA.

Mr. HOGGE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Public Health Commissioner appointed for eight months to act at Simla possesses a British diploma in public health; whether, as this post is the highest in the service, and as the Government insist that officers appointed to any public health post must have a British diploma in public health, he will say why this qualification has been waived in this case; and whether there is any intention to make the appointment permanent?

Mr. RICHARDS: Lieut. - Colonel Graham, Indian Medical Service, who was appointed by the Government of India to act during the absence of the Public Health Commissioner on leave, is not registered as holding the diploma of public health. My noble Friend has no information as to the latter part of the question, as the appointment of Public Health Commissioner is made by the Government of India, but Lieut.-Colonel Graham holds the degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Master of Surgery, Glasgow, and the diploma of Tropical Medicine. During the War he held the appointment of Assistant Director of Medical Services (Sanitary) at General Headquarters, Mesopotamia, and since the War he has held the post of Director of Health Services and Adviser to the Ministry of Health in the Iraq Government.

UNATTACHED LIST (OFFICERS' PENSIONS).

Mr. BETTERTON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India have yet reached a decision upon the question of the revision of the scale of pensions of Departmental officers and warrant officers of the India unattached list; and, if not, whether the Secretary of State will press for an early answer from the Government of India, in view of the length of time the matter has been under consideration and its im-

portance to those affected by the conclusions ultimately reached?

Mr. RICHARDS: Steps have already been taken to hasten the reply of the Government of India.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether it is the intention of the Government of India to ratify the proposals of the International Labour Convention of Washington concerning maternity benefits?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer is in the negative. The Washington Conference of 1919 resolved that the Indian Government should be requested to make a study of the question of the employment of women before and after confinement, and of maternity benefits, and to report on these matters. I am sending my hon. Friend a copy of the Report of the Government of India.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the mortality rate for children under one year and under five years for each of the years 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, and 1923 in Bombay?

Mr. RICHARDS: The following are the figures for 1919 and 1920:

Ratio of deaths per 1,000 of population in Bombay Presidency according to age.

Year.	Under 1 year.		1 year and under 5 years.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1919 ...	206·70	196·73	56·48	55·32
1920 ...	191·42	174·26	45·60	43·20

The figures for 1921, 1922 and 1923 are not yet available.

Mr. SCURR asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the Report of the lady doctor appointed by the Government of Bombay to the effect that 98 per cent. of the children born in the industrial area in Bombay are drugged with opium; and what steps the Government of Bombay proposes to take to deal with this evil?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen the Report referred to. I am not aware of the action taken by the Government of Bombay, but will inquire.

Tuesday, 29th July, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BRITISH ARMY.

LIEUTENANT C. H. CLENDINING.

14. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is now in a position to state whether it is his intention to appoint a commission or committee to hold a public inquiry into the case of Lieutenant C. H. Clendining?

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Walsh): I have given this matter the personal consideration which I promised in the House on 20th May. The case has been examined by the Army Council, and I have now made my Report to His Majesty, under Section 42 of the Army Act.

Mr. LANSBURY: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us exactly what that means? Is there going to be an inquiry?

Mr. WALSH: I stated to my hon. Friend months ago, in answer to a special request, that I would give the matter my own personal consideration. Not only did I make that announcement, but I am bound, under the law of the land, to act under Section 42 of the Army Act. That was the procedure which I promised to the House. That procedure I have adopted. I am bound to make a Report to His Majesty, and I must wait for His Majesty's decision before I can take any further action.

Mr. LANSBURY: That is all right. We can wait and see.

DOMINION AND INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONERS (PRECEDENCE).

70. **Mr. ORMSBY-GORE** asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies what arrangements have been come to with regard to the precedence of the High Commissioners of the Dominions and India?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Thomas): As the House is aware, among the matters discussed at the Imperial Conference, 1923, was the

question of the precedence of the High Commissioners in London. In accordance with the undertaking then given the matter was examined and suggestions were put forward, with His Majesty's approval, by the late Government for the consideration of the Dominion Prime Ministers and the Government of India. These proposals have proved generally acceptable, and His Majesty has now been pleased to direct that the High Commissioners for Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland and India should be given precedence on ceremonial occasions, according to the following principles:

- (a) When British or Dominion Ministers being at the time members of their respective Cabinets, are present, the High Commissioners should take precedence immediately after them; this is subject to the qualification that the High Commissioner should not on any occasion be given a higher place than that accorded by the Table of Precedence to Secretaries of State.
- (b) When no members of the British or Dominion Cabinets are present, the High Commissioners should take precedence immediately after that accorded by the Table of Precedence to Secretaries of State.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BRITISH ARMY.

NUMBERS EMBARKED FOR INDIA.

Mr. C. WILSON asked the Secretary of State for War the numbers of warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and men who were embarked for India in the years 1921, 1922, and 1923; and how many of them in each year were under 21 years of age?

Mr. WALSH: The total number who embarked during these three years was 36,750, but I regret that I am not in a position to say how many were under 21. Excluding boys, the normal minimum age during the period was 19 and 20 years.

20 years is now the minimum age for drafts.

Wednesday, 30th July, 1924.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,

Amendments to—

Government of India (Leave of Absence) Bill [*Lords*], without Amendment.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

ARMY, COMMISSARIES' PENSIONS.

Sir H. CAYZER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, seeing that the pensions of the Indian Army Departments are considerably less than those of other services, and that the question of increasing them to the same amount as those of the Home services, with an addition for service in India, is under consideration, and in view of the promise that steps will be taken to hasten a decision in the case of commissaries, deputy and assistant commissaries of the Indian Army, it is possible to reconsider the reduction of 5 per cent. as from 1st July on the pensions of these officers, with a view to it being withdrawn until a final decision is reached in regard to the whole question of pensions of commissaries, etc., of the Indian Army?

Mr. RICHARDS: The question under consideration is whether any improvement in the present scale of pensions of this class is necessary, and pending a decision my Noble Friend is not prepared to exempt these pensions from the general reduction.

SUPPLY.

[19TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS
ESTIMATES, 1924-25.

CLASS II.

7. India Office	£ 80,000
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Question put, and agreed to.
Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Thursday, 31st July, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

HUMAN ANTHRAX.

Mr. B. SMITH asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware that the sole source of anthrax in hides, horns, hoofs, bones, wool, and hair emanates from India and Asia; and what steps he intends taking to prevent the spread of anthrax poisoning?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend is advised that anthrax among animals is found in most countries, though it may be specially prevalent in Asia. Human anthrax is, however, an exceedingly rare industrial disease in India. The disinfection in India of wool and hair used in the textile industry before export is impracticable. As regards the other materials mentioned by my hon. Friend, it was decided at the International Labour Conference recently held at Geneva that the question of their treatment before use in industry should be placed on the agenda of a future conference.

Mr. SMITH also asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he will recommend to the Provincial Government of India the application of the provisions under the Indian Factories Act regarding the handling and transport of hides, horns, hoofs, bones, wool, and hair from India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 21st July to the hon. Member for North Salford (Mr. Tillet). The matter is within the discretion of the Government of India, which I have no reason to doubt they will exercise wisely.

TERRITORIAL FORCE.

Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the present numbers of the Territorial Force in India; and whether they are liable to be called out in defence of the civil power?

Mr. RICHARDS: The strength of the Territorial Force in India on 1st May, 1924, was

Officers	...	...	...	271
Other ranks	...	...	...	11,593

They are liable to be called out in support of the civil power.

WAZIRISTAN (FRONTIER TROOPS).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering the various outrages and attacks on posts that have lately taken place on the frontier, the Government of India will reconsider their decision to regard Waziristan as being under peace-time conditions and to withdraw all active service privileges from the troops employed there?

Mr. RICHARDS: An inquiry will be sent to the Government of India on the subject.

SUPPLY.

[20TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Resolutions [30th July] reported,

CIVIL SERVICES ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1924-25.

CLASS II

Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the outstanding Resolutions reported in respect of Class II of the Civil Services Estimates," put, and agreed to.

Friday, 1st August, 1924.

ROYAL ASSENT.

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—

8. Government of India (Leave of Absence) Act, 1924.

Monday, 4th August, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSIONER (SIMLA).

1. **Mr. HOGGE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the post of Public Health Commissioner at Simla will be vacant in August of this year; and whether those considered for the appointment will require to hold a British diploma in public health?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The reply to

the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The appointment is made by the Government of India, and I have no information as to the second part.

Mr. HOGGE: Is it not a fact that every junior Commissioner in this service must hold the British diploma in public health before he receives the appointment, and can we not receive an assurance from the Government that this post, which is the best in the Indian Public Health Service, shall not be given to any man who does not hold the same diploma which is required for everybody who joins the service?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not aware that the facts are quite as stated by my hon. Friend, but I will draw my Noble Friend's attention to this point.

Mr. HOGGE: Why is my hon. Friend not aware of this, when every man who enters the service is made aware of the fact that he cannot enter the service without holding the British diploma in public health, and why should a senior position be given to anyone who does not hold that diploma?

Mr. MACPHERSON: Is it not a fact that anyone appointed to the service in this country must have that diploma?

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Is this appointment made by the Government of India without reference to the Secretary of State, and has the Secretary of State any power of confirmation or refusal of confirmation?

Mr. RICHARDS: The appointment is made by the Government of India without reference at all to the Secretary of State. With regard to the other questions, the reason I am not aware of this provision is that there are certain exceptions.

Sir HENRY CRAIK: Is the hon. Member aware that if the position is as indicated it will effectually stop any recruiting for the Indian Civil Service; and does he know what a danger this is?

Mr. HANNON: Is it proposed to supersede the qualification of the British diploma of public health by some other qualification?

Mr. RICHARDS: There is no such suggestion as that, but I will promise to

bring this matter to the notice of my Noble Friend.

Sir H. CRAIK: You cannot do it too quickly.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

2. **Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, now that the Punjab Government has notified that it has been compelled to prosecute the publishers of newspapers containing matter calculated to excite the feelings of one community against another, the Government of India will introduce legislation to put a stop to the license of abuse that since the repeal of the Press Act has been unchecked in the Indian Press?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have no reason to think that proposals for such legislation are contemplated.

Sir C. YATE: Will the hon. Gentleman think over this matter, because it is very serious?

Mr. HEALY: Will the hon. Gentleman take into consideration the case of certain Belfast newspapers who are doing the same thing in regard to the Irish Treaty, and why should there be any difference between Ireland and India in this matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is a matter for the Colonial Secretary to deal with.

SEDITIONOUS POSTER (CALCUTTA).

3. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he can give any information regarding the document signed President in Council, Red Bengal, posted on the walls of public buildings in Calcutta and also sent by post to the police officers, judges of the High Court, and others in Calcutta, announcing a campaign of ruthless assassination of police officers and any others obstructing their comrades or helping the Government; and whether the authors have been traced and arrested or what has been done in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have ascertained that the facts reported in the Press as to the circulation of this document, and its terms, are substantially correct. The Bengal Government have declared all copies of the leaflet to be forfeited under the Code of Criminal Procedure, and every effort is being made to trace the

[Mr. Richards.]

offenders. So far as I am aware no arrests have yet been made.

Sir C. YATE: Is there any hope that an arrest will be made? Is there anything going on in Calcutta to put an end to this state of things?

Mr. RICHARDS: We are making an effort.

Lieut.-Colonel JAMES: Will the hon. Gentleman consult his noble Friend to find out whether it is possible to do anything to prevent this sort of thing occurring in the future?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

CALCUTTA, LAW COURTS (DISCIPLINE).

Mr. THURTLÉ asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he has any information regarding the recent incident in the Law Courts at Calcutta, in which Mr. S. C. Bose, a leading Calcutta lawyer, was involved; is he aware that a mass meeting of protest organised by the Calcutta bar has been held; and will he cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances of this incident?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen only a Press report of the incident mentioned in the question. The maintenance of discipline in the Courts is entirely a matter for the High Court.

"CRESCENT" (PROHIBITION).

Mr. LANSBURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Muslim organ in Europe, the "Crescent," is prohibited from circulating in India; and will he take steps to inquire of the Viceroy the reasons why this journal is prohibited?

Mr. RICHARDS: The importation into British India of this paper, which is published in Berlin, was prohibited by the Government of India by Notification of the 2nd May last. I see no reason to address any inquiry to the Government of India as to the propriety of their action.

NEW GOVERNMENT BUILDING, DELHI (INDIAN DECORATORS).

Mr. T. WILLIAMS asked the Under-Secretary of State for India why the Government of India, who are responsible for painting and decorations in the new building at Delhi, are refusing to give work to Indian decorators of proved ability from the Bombay School of Art, whose work is exhibited at the British Empire Exhibition, even though these artists are applying to do the work at a very reasonable price, and although the Government of Bombay gives scholarships valued Rs.30 or £2 per month to artists under training whose sole means of livelihood is the scholarship?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information.

HUMAN ANTHRAX.

Colonel PERKINS asked the Home Secretary whether he is satisfied that the provision of a disinfecting station at Liverpool is the best means of protecting British workers against infection from material which contains the germs of anthrax; and whether, seeing that this disinfecting station cannot possibly protect dock workers handling such material, he will undertake to explore thoroughly the first means of protection suggested by general conference of the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations, 1919, namely, the disinfection of material infected with anthrax spores in the country exporting such material?

Mr. HENDERSON: The Home Office has throughout been fully alive to the desirability of arranging, if practicable, for disinfection in the country of export; and with this object in view, immediately after the Home Office Committee on Anthrax reported in 1918, representations were made to the Government of India, from which country the greater part of the infected material comes. The Government of India, however, have not seen their way to arrange for disinfection in India and we have therefore been thrown back on the alternative of providing for disinfection at the port of entry in this country. Under the arrangements in force at Liverpool the material is conveyed direct from the ship to the disinfecting station, so that the risk to the dock workers is reduced to a minimum.

Tuesday, 5th August, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BRITISH ARMY.

LIEUTENANT CLENDINING.

18. **Mr. LANSBURY** asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is now in a position to state what action is proposed to be taken as a result of his Report to His Majesty in reference to the appeal of Lieutenant Clendining for a committee, or commission, of inquiry into the allegations made by him against certain officers and others in His Majesty's service?

Mr. WALSH: It is not proposed to take any further action of the nature suggested. I regret that I was unable to advise His Majesty to issue any special instructions in regard to this officer's petition.

Mr. LANSBURY: Has not my right hon. Friend considered, in view of the great public interest in this man's case, referring the whole of his complaint to some outside legal gentleman to investigate?

Mr. HEALY: Why has not the public inquiry proceeded? There must be something rotten in the state of Denmark.

Mr. WALSH: I understand my hon. Friend to suggest that it may be possible to refer the whole of the agreed papers relevant to the case to some single authority, not a commission or committee of inquiry, but the agreed relevant papers to some single person, who will go into the whole case and report. If that is the line he suggests, I will certainly give it my best consideration.

PUBLIC SERVICES: PREMATURE RETIREMENT.

65. **Captain BENN** asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether he can furnish a list of Imperial civil officers appointed between the years 1896 and 1913 to permanent pensionable appointments who, being on medical leave at the date of the introduction of the proportionate pension scheme, 7th November, 1921, on account of disabilities incurred on military service, or who would still have been on leave on that date according

to the ordinary Civil Service leave Regulations but for premature medical retirement for that reason, have been prematurely retired under the old scale?

The **UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards):** One of the conditions precedent to an officer's eligibility for the proportionate pension scheme to which the hon. and gallant Member refers is that he is physically fit to continue to serve at the date when he is permitted to retire on proportionate pension. As there is no intention of waiving this condition, I am afraid I cannot undertake to furnish the statement asked for, the preparation of which would involve the expenditure of much time and labour.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BONNA ROAD INCIDENT.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is prepared to make any statement regarding the incident which took place on the Bonna Road, when two khassadars murdered the havildar and took possession of a tower, from which they had to be dislodged by force; how these troops are enlisted, what are their duties, and how they are officered; and whether they are a recognised part of the Indian Army?

Mr. RICHARDS: No official report on the incident has yet been received. The khassadars are tribal levies who are paid by the Indian Government to assist in the protection of roads, and the maintenance of peace and order generally on the frontier. They supply their own arms, ammunition, food and clothing and have their own officers, though they are under the general control of British political officers. They do not form part of the Indian army.

Wednesday, 6th August, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

AKALI SIKHS.

58. **Sir C. YATE** asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that during this year armed

[Sir C. Yate.]

bands of Akali Sikhs, known as Jathas, have been collected by an organised body in the Punjab and marched through British territory, terrorising the rural population on the route, to invade the Nabha State and to take forcible possession of religious foundations there, whereby the Nabha State has had to maintain large armed forces to protect its institutions and that serious collisions, with loss of life, have taken place; and whether the British Government, which is responsible by treaty for the protection of the Nabha State against external aggression, will now take the necessary steps to prevent the collection of these Jathas in British India and the invasion of a friendly State?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The Government of India are in close communication with the Administrator of the Nabha State, and I have no reason to think that the policy which has been adopted is not the most likely to serve the common interest.

Sir C. YATE: Has the hon. Gentleman seen the telegram from Simla on this subject in this morning's newspaper, stating that certain of these men are being arrested; and will the Government now arrest the men who are organising and instigating the march of these Jathas?

Mr. RICHARDS: That is an indication that the Government is doing its duty.

Mr. HOPE SIMPSON: Is it a fact that it is now only with great difficulty that these processions are organised at all?

Mr. RICHARDS: I believe that is so.

Thursday, 7th August, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

MOSLEMS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

36. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, if his attention has been called to the note submitted by the Moslem members of the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State

to the member in charge of the Home Department of the Government of India, pointing out that only some 5 per cent. of the total Government appointments held by Indians are Moslems, and that such disparity cannot but foster discontent; and if he can state what steps the Government of India are taking to give Moslems a proportionate share in Government employment in the various departments?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): I have just been furnished with a copy of the note to which the hon. and gallant Member refers. The general policy of the Government of India is, I believe, to secure, wherever it may be possible, that a service is not overweighted with any one class of recruit. But it is obvious that steps to this end can be taken only in services which are recruited wholly or partly by nomination.

Mr. HEALY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Nationalists in Northern Ireland are in a worse position in this respect than the Moslems of India?

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

IMPERIAL WIRELESS STATIONS.

Mr. BAKER asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Marconi Company is negotiating for the control of the Imperial wireless stations to be situated in India; and whether, having regard to the importance of these stations in that they will, as relay stations, control the route to Australia, he will advise the Indian Government to own and control these stations?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no official information. He has, however, seen Press statements regarding the formation of an Indian radio telegraph company. Invitations to tender for the formation of an Indian company to erect and work a high-power station were issued in February last, applications being receivable up to 1st August. Certain rights of purchase and control are reserved to Government in the conditions of the tender. My Noble Friend

is not at this stage prepared to advise the Government of India to reverse their policy.

ROYAL INDIAN MARINE (ADMIRALTY COURSES).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, under the terms of squadron order No. 336, of 2nd July, 1924, issued by the director, Royal Indian Marine, instructing officers of the Royal Indian Marine to go through the various Admiralty courses in navigation, gunnery, etc., therein referred to, it is intended that the period of these courses is to be counted as part of the officer's leave or whether the period of each course is to count as duty and outside the period of leave; and if he can state what provision is to be made for the payment of the officers' passages to and from the United Kingdom, as was granted for the Greenwich course under the old scheme?

Mr. RICHARDS: The orders to which the hon. and gallant Member refers are subject to the Secretary of State's approval. In considering them my Noble Friend will give attention to the points raised.

ARMY OFFICERS' PENSIONS.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if, before making any reduction of the pensions of officers of the Indian Army with retrospective effect from 1st July, 1924, he will take into consideration the hardship that may be inflicted upon these retired officers by mulcting them of accumulated arrears in one lump sum?

Mr. RICHARDS: A provisional deduction of approximately 5 per cent. is already being made with effect from 1st July, in order to avoid any hardship through the recovery of accumulated arrears.

KENYA (INDIANS).

Mr. MILLS asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is in a position to make any statement with regard to the representations which have recently been made to him on certain matters affecting Indians in Kenya by the India Committee under the chairman-

ship of the hon. Member for Taunton (Mr. J. Hope Simpson)?

Mr. THOMAS: I will take the subject in the order raised by the Committee:

(1) Immigration: My position is that if the danger ever arises of such an influx of immigrants of whatever class, race, nationality or character as may be likely to be prejudicial to the economic interests of the natives, I hold myself entirely free to take any action which may be necessary. The conflicting statistics which have been laid before me have not enabled me to reach a definite conclusion as to the extent of the net Indian immigration. Accordingly, steps will be taken to create a statistical department to obtain accurate information with regard to persons of all races arriving in or departing from Kenya. Meanwhile the Kenya Immigration Ordinance will not be enacted.

(2) Franchise: I have given careful consideration to the representations in favour of a common roll, but I am not prepared to resist the conclusion arrived at in Cmd. 1,922 of July, 1923, that in the special circumstances of Kenya, with four diverse communities each of which will ultimately require electoral representation, the communal system is the best way to secure the fair representation of each and all of these communities.

(3) Highlands: I consider that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has no alternative but to continue the pledges expressed or implied which have been given in the past, and I can hold out no hope of the policy in regard to agricultural land in the highlands being reconsidered.

(4) Lowlands: It was proposed to reserve an area in the lowlands for agricultural immigrants from India. The Committee made it plain that it is averse from any reservation of land for any immigrant race. Subject to that it suggested that before applications for land in the lowland areas are invited the opportunity should be taken of sending an officer, experienced in Indian settlement and agricultural methods, to report on the areas. At present any consideration of the matter is in suspense, pending the receipt from the Colony of reports from the native and agricultural points of view on the areas in question.

Thursday, 2nd October, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India, if he is able to make an official statement as to the position at present obtaining in Bengal as the result of the rejection by the Bengal Legislative Council of the vote for the salaries of the Ministers and of the consequent resignation of such Ministers?

Mr. RICHARDS: The position is that the Governor is himself temporarily administering the transferred subjects under the provisions of the Transferred Subjects (Temporary Administration) Rules framed under Section 52 (3) of the Government of India Act.

LORD LEE'S COMMISSION (RECOMMENDATIONS).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if it is now proposed to bring the recommendations of the Lee Commission into operation without further delay; and whether these recommendations will be adopted in full, including those relating to the medical service?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am not yet in a position to make any statement on this subject. My Noble Friend the Secretary of State is still in correspondence with the Government of India on certain points, and both he and that Government are desirous that orders on the Report should be issued with the least possible delay.

Lieut.-Colonel POWNALL asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, in the event of the Government accepting the Lee Commission's recommendation to raise the ordinary uncovenanted service pension by 1,000 rupees per annum, the proportionate pension, which is a proportion of the full pension, will be similarly raised; and, if not, if officers who have retired since April, 1924, on proportionate pensions may draw the ordinary pension which they have earned instead of the proportionate pension?

Mr. RICHARDS: I regret that, until final decisions on the recommendations of

Lord Lee's Commission have been settled, it is impossible to make any statement as to questions consequentially contingent.

Wednesday, 8th October, 1924.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what course the Government intends to pursue in view of the passing by the legislative assembly of a Bill repealing the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Bill in question passed only one of the two Chambers before the Legislature adjourned. No question therefore of action by His Majesty's Government arises at present.

BRITISH TROOPS (DISTURBANCES).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that the district magistrate of Shahjahanpur has now been compelled to apply for British troops to quell the Hindoo-Moslem disturbances at that place, and that the reduction of 18,000 British troops below the pre-War figure has placed too great a strain on the ability of the military authorities in India to meet all the demands made on them for assistance in suppressing internal disturbances; and whether the question of the reductions in the strength of the British garrison in India will now be brought up for reconsideration by the Defence Committee and the authorities concerned?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The Secretary of State does not accept as a fact the suggestion contained in the second part, which is not supported by any of the information in his possession. The answer to the third part is in the negative.

BENGAL COUNCIL.

Mr. THURTLÉ asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to letters recently published purporting to be facsimiles of

letters written by ministers of the Bengal Council, which letters indicate the existence of corruption and jobbery in connection with the affairs of the Bengal Council; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen an Indian newspaper containing what apparently purports to be a copy of a letter from an ex-Minister of the Bengal Government. Mr. Fuzlul Huq, to whom the authorship of the alleged letter is imputed, has, according to Press reports, stated in the Bengal Council that he never wrote any such letter, that the letter is not genuine, and that it purports to be addressed to a gentleman who does not exist.

INDIAN SERVICE MILITARY PENSIONS.

Sir P. RICHARDSON asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he is aware that the pensions of Indian service officers enjoy a smaller increase in respect of increased cost of living than those of British service officers as compared with 1919; and whether it is intended to place both services on the same footing in this respect?

Mr. RICHARDS: In considering the reduction of Indian service military pensions my Noble Friend is taking account of the fact that the increase in 1919 on account of the cost of living was not uniformly the same for both services.

ROYAL INDIAN MARINE.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if his attention has been called to the plight of the Royal Indian Marine; and what decision the Government of India has arrived at regarding the reorganisation of the Royal Indian Marine on a combatant basis?

Mr. RICHARDS: Consideration of the future of the Royal Indian Marine is proceeding, but has not yet reached a stage at which any decision can be announced.

TROOPS IN WAZIRISTAN (CASUALTIES AND FIELD SERVICE CONCESSIONS).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the return of casualties in Waziristan during July last giving the list of officers, non-commissioned officers and men killed in action and died of wounds, etc.; and whether the Govern-

ment of India have now reconsidered the question of withdrawing the field-service concessions from the troops in Waziristan under which they have hitherto been serving?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, an inquiry has been addressed to the Government of India and my Noble Friend will consider the matter on receipt of their reply.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether, considering that the Indian Legislative Assembly has definitely shown itself opposed to co-operation and without the sense of responsibility as required by the Preamble to the Government of India Act, and has done its best to wreck the reforms, the Viceroy will now suspend the Assembly *sine die* and govern the country without it?

Mr. RICHARDS: The Governor-General of India has not indicated any disposition to take this course.

GOLD IMPORTS.

Sir F. WISE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India the amount of gold that India has bought in Britain in 1924, and also the amount that India has bought in New York in 1924?

Mr. RICHARDS: Figures distributing Indian gold imports among countries of origin are available only for the first seven months, January to July, of 1924. During this period of gold imports valued at approximately Rs. 17 crores, the value of the imports from the United Kingdom and Natal* was Rs. 11½ crores, approximately. During the same period no gold was imported into India from the United States. August imports of gold (the latest month for which statistics are available), amounted to Rs. 4 crores, but, as explained above, the details of distribution among countries are not yet to hand. It is understood that some gold was bought for India in New York a few weeks ago, but details are not yet available. The above figures concern imports on private

* The Natal figures are included as it is understood that South African gold is bought through London.

account, no Government purchases having been made in the period.

RUPEE LOAN.

Sir F. WISE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if the full amount of 15 crores was subscribed to the last rupee loan?

Mr. RICHARDS: No, Sir. The subscriptions amounted approximately to 13½ crores.

Thursday, 9th October, 1924.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

WAZIRISTAN OPERATIONS

21. Lieut. - Colonel HOWARD - BURY asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can give the number of British and Indian casualties since 1st January, 1924, at Razmak, in Waziristan; whether he is aware that the troops only receive now ordinary pay and peace rations and ration allowance, though to all intents on active service; whether he is aware that the tents are unserviceable and leaky, and that numerous complaints have been received; and will he restore the active service pay which has formerly been customary to those quartered on the North-West Frontier?

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Richards): The casualties in the force at Razmak for the period from 1st January to the 31st August, 1924, were as follow:

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| (1) Indian Army: | | | | |
| Killed in action and died of | | | | |
| wounds | ... | ... | ... | 6 |
| Wounded | ... | ... | ... | 27 |
| (2) British Army: | | | | |
| Killed in action and died of | | | | |
| wounds | ... | ... | ... | 2 |

It is the case that since 1st April of this year field service concessions have been withdrawn from the troops serving at Razmak. As I informed the hon. and gallant Member for Melton (Sir C. Yate) yesterday, however, an enquiry has been addressed to the Government of India whether any of these concessions should be restored, and my Noble Friend will consider the matter on receipt of their

reply. I have no information to lead me to suppose that the tents are unserviceable or that numerous complaints have been received. I may perhaps inform the hon. and gallant Member that at Razmak a large proportion of the troops are now quartered in comfortable stone-built barracks.

Lieut.-Colonel HOWARD-BURY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that there is no bazaar whatever for the troops there, that the hospital accommodation is totally inadequate, and, in view of all these casualties, can he not see that the troops are put back under active service conditions approximating to the ordinary cantonment lines?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have just said that my information is otherwise. We have made representations to the Government of India.

MOSLEMS AND HINDUS, PUNJAB.

22. Colonel Sir CHARLES YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the virulence of the vernacular papers in the Punjab which has been instrumental in increasing the communal tension between Muslims and Hindus that has led to so many outbreaks and deaths of late at Delhi, Kohat, and elsewhere; and whether the Secretary of State will now consider the question of the responsibility imposed upon the Government of India by the repeal of the Press Act?

Mr. RICHARDS: Some inter-communal animosity has been exhibited in the Press of the Punjab which is, perhaps, rather the result than the cause of the ill-feeling between Moslems and Hindus. It has not been unchecked, and within the four months ending with August there have been nine prosecutions of the persons responsible for articles in newspapers or pamphlets intended, in the words of the law,

"to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects."

As to the Press Act, I would refer the hon. and gallant Member to the replies given to his questions on the 7th and 14th April last.

Mr. D. HERBERT: Will the Under-Secretary say whether any of these prosecutions have been withdrawn?

Sir C. YATE: Can the hon. Gentleman say if any convictions have been obtained?

Mr. RICHARDS: Yes.

DEPRESSED CLASSES.

23. Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the address presented to the Governor of the Central Provinces by the Depressed Classes' Association, calling attention to the incessant demand put forward by the higher castes for immediate Swaraj for India and pointing out the danger that if the grant of complete Swaraj be unduly accelerated the last hopes of throwing off the burden of caste domination will be finally extinguished, and urging an investigation into the conditions of the submerged classes of India; and if he can state what steps are being taken by the committee now sitting in India on the working of the Government of India Act of 1919 to give full consideration to the appeal of these depressed classes for just and fair treatment at the hands of the higher classes?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not seen the particular address referred to, but am aware that views of a similar kind have been expressed in other resolutions and addresses of representatives of the depressed classes. I am not aware whether the Committee of Inquiry referred to in the question has regarded the consideration of such appeals as falling within the scope of the questions referred to them.

MR. JUSTICE P. R. DAS.

25. Sir C. YATE asked the Prime Minister if he has received any communication from Mr. Justice P. R. Das, of the Patna High Court, acting on behalf of his brother, Mr. C. R. Das, the leader of the Swaraj party; and whether he can give any information to the House as to the purport of this communication?

The PRIME MINISTER: I have received no direct communication from Mr. Das, though I understand he wished to see me. I must protect Mr. Das, however, against the insinuation that he has been acting on behalf of his brother.

FLOODS, PUNJAB.

Mr. WARDLAW MILNE (*by Private Notice*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he will give the House the latest information he has re-

garding the disastrous floods in the Punjab; what arrangements have been made for relief of those affected, and what loss of life and property has been caused by the overflow of the river Jumna or in other ways?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no information beyond what has appeared in the Press.

INTER-COMMUNAL DISTURBANCES.

Mr. MILNE (*by Private Notice*) asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether serious riots between Hindus and Mahommedans have broken out at Allahabad; how many people have been killed or injured; whether British and Indian troops were employed to restore order, and whether any other outbreaks in other parts of the country have occurred?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have not yet received any official report regarding the riots at Allahabad which to-day's Press messages from India describe. I will circulate in the OFFICIAL REPORT a note on inter-communal disturbances which have occurred recently at a few places in India.

Mr. MILNE: Cannot the hon. Gentleman undertake to get the information? Surely it is very important information for this House to have. It seems to me rather strange that he should have none to give beyond his very sketchy reply.

Mr. RICHARDS: I suggest that the hon. Member should wait for the Report which I am circulating.

Following is the Note promised:

STATEMENT REGARDING THE DISTURBANCES DURING AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER, 1924, BETWEEN HINDUS AND MOSLEMS IN INDIA.

The most important day of the Festival of the Muharram was the 12th August. The processions connected with the ceremony were carried out without any important breach of the peace throughout British India. But on the previous day there occurred at Gulbarga in the Nizam's dominions a serious collision between the two communities. On the 23rd August there was a less important incident of the same kind in Bhagalpur in Bihar which was stopped by the police after 12 persons had been injured. On

the 30th August a Hindu procession was attacked with stones by Moslems in Nagpur, in the Central Provinces, and there was some looting, but order was quickly restored. Eleven persons were injured, of whom one died in the hospital.

There was a riot between Hindus and Moslems on the 9th September at Kanod, a small town in the State of Indore, caused by music played by a Hindu procession in front of a mosque. Eighteen Hindus were reported to be injured.

On the 9th and 10th September, serious disturbances occurred in Kohat in the North West Frontier Province. They originated in the publication of a scurrilous anti-Moslem pamphlet. The actual violence commenced with shots fired in panic by Hindu residents of the city. The disorder was accompanied with incendiarism and looting, and very large material damage was caused before order was restored with the help of the troops. Almost the whole of the Hindu population of the city (though not of the cantonment) left the place for Rawalpindi. The casualties ascertained are as follows—police, 6 injured; Hindus, 20 killed, 24 seriously injured, 62 slightly injured, 16 missing, of whom it is believed 9 are unidentified bodies included among the 20 killed; Mohammedans, 11 killed, 6 seriously injured, 17 slightly wounded. There have been large recoveries effected of the loot carried off by neighbouring villagers, and on the 19th September it was reported that the city was now quiet. A full report by the Chief Commissioner of the Province has been called for by the Government of India.

On the 12th September, fighting between the two communities broke out in Lucknow City as a result of protracted bickering. The immediate occasion was a clash between hours of worship in one locality. Here also the troops were called in to patrol, but there was no fighting and the casualties were not numerous, only four deaths and thirty cases of injury having been reported.

On the 22nd September similar fighting began at Shajahanpur in the United Provinces. Quiet was restored next day, but rioting occurred again on the 24th, and military assistance was called in from Bareilly. The troops were sufficient to maintain order and to disperse gatherings

of villagers who attempted to enter the city. The total casualties reported here up to the 25th September were six killed and 104 wounded. Full reports regarding these riots in the United Provinces are expected by mail.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND PROVINCIAL COUNCILS.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India if he has received a copy of the address presented to His Excellency the Viceroy by the All India Viswakarma Liberal Federation, a community said to number over 30,000,000 of the handicrafts men and artisan classes of India, praying for representation on the Legislative Assembly and provincial councils from which they are debarred at present by the higher classes whom they term the narrow educated minority; and what steps are being taken to give the artisan class of India the representation in the various local government bodies and councils that they desire?

Mr. RICHARDS: The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. Pending the completion of the inquiry now proceeding into the working of the present constitution, it would be premature to make any statement in reply to the second part of the question.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what is the percentage of lawyers, including barristers, pleaders and bakils, in the Indian Legislative Assembly and the various provincial councils, respectively; and if the information is not available here will he obtain it from India?

Mr. RICHARDS: I am asking the Government of India to supply the information, which is not available here.

PROPAGANDA AND AGITATION.

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the statement issued to the Indian Press by Hakim Ajmal Khan, a leading Congress man, on the subject of the Hindu-Muslim riots at Delhi, in which he condemns the local

authorities for having done nothing to curb the propagandist activities and mischievous agitation engineered by interested parties; and will the Secretary of State now represent to the Government of India the necessity of bringing in the necessary legislation that will enable the local authorities to curb these propagandist activities and mischievous agitations, as desired by the hakim, without fear of the consequences?

Mr. RICHARDS: My Noble Friend has no doubt that the Government of India will give to the representations made in the statement referred to all the consideration that they deserve and he does not propose to intervene in aid of their judgment upon them.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE (PROSECUTION).

Sir C. YATE asked the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the accusation made by an Akali vernacular paper to

the effect that boys in one of the Shahidi jathas were suspended from trees by their hair and then brutally beaten by the Nabha authorities; considering that Nabha is a native State under treaty with the British Government, will he take the necessary legal steps to protect the officials of the Nabha State from similar calumnies; and, if the existing law in India is not adequate to deal with the present irresponsibility displayed by Indian journalists, will he take steps to strengthen that law?

Mr. RICHARDS: I have seen a translation or summary of the article referred to. The editor of the paper is being prosecuted on a charge based on the issue containing that article, and I presume the charge relates to the article. My Noble Friend has received from the Government of India no indication of an opinion that the existing law in India in regard to press responsibility is inadequate.

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